

# The Brooklyn Paper

Including Carroll Gardens-Cobble Hill Paper, The Downtown News, DUMBO and Fort Greene-Clinton Hill Paper

**A Brooklyn  
Papers  
Publication**  
Brooklyn's REAL Newspapers

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## Idiot's delight

Participants in the first "Idiotarod" cross the Brooklyn Bridge with a shopping cart last Saturday. The event, which takes its name from the famous Alaskan dog-sled race, the Iditarod, saw teams of five race shopping carts from Fulton Ferry Landing in Brooklyn to Tompkins Square Park in Manhattan for cash prizes. While there was no set course, teams were required to make stops at two checkpoints in downtown Manhattan along the way.

## MARTY'S BKLYN

### It's cruises, Ikea, Nets all the way

**By Jotham Sederstrom**  
The Brooklyn Papers

Borough President Marty Markowitz promoted Brooklyn as a future home to professional basketball, the city's first Ikea furniture store and, most conspicuously during his State of the Borough address, a dock for commercial cruise ships.

Kicking off the address at the Brooklyn Museum on Jan. 27, Markowitz walked on stage alongside actor Tony Danza carrying a cardboard mock-up of a cruise ship.

"Thanks, dock it in my usual spot — Pier 11 in Red Hook," Markowitz told the Brooklyn-born actor and TV talk show host as he approached the podium.

Two cruise ship lines, Norwegian and Carnival, are expected to dock at Pier 12 in Red Hook as early as this fall with Pier 11 used as a vehicular entryway to the dock.

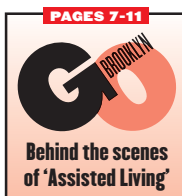
"These cruise lines will bring tens of thousands of new tourists into Brooklyn," Markowitz said of the construction, which is scheduled to begin in March. "So it's a good thing that last week we broke ground for the expansion of the Brooklyn Marriot — we're gonna need it."

More contentious, however, were his endorsements of an Ikea store that is to be built on the Red Hook waterfront and developer Bruce Ratner's Atlantic Yards project. The latter, a 24-acre plan, would be built on a portion of Prospect Heights, stretching from the intersection of Flatbush and Atlantic avenues, and rely on eminent domain property condemnations to construct apartment and office skyscrapers and a basketball arena for Ratner's New Jersey Nets.

The mention of the Ratner project drew loud boos from anti-arena activists Patti and Schellie Hagan, who sat among a pool of reporters in the back of the auditorium. When Markowitz promised that the project would create "about 10,000 permanent new jobs" and "15,000 construction-related jobs,"

See **STATE BORO** on page 12

Borough President Marty Markowitz (with Brooklyn-born actor and talk-show host Tony Danza) at his State of the Borough address at the Brooklyn Museum Thursday.



## Brooklynite tapped as 'Explorer'

**By Jotham Sederstrom**  
The Brooklyn Papers

Using statistics, Andrew Zollis predicts such things as foreign war waged over natural resources and a future in which the modern nuclear family makes way for European-style multi-generational living.

### EXCLUSIVE

Zollis is what is known as a futurist. But one thing the Park Slope resident likely didn't foresee is the National Geographic Society one day recruiting him as a resident voyager.

But on Monday, Feb. 7, the 117-year-old institution will name Zollis — who runs Z + Partners, a think-tank that specializes in helping people and institutions understand and respond to change, from an office on Jay Street in DUMBO — an Emerging Explorer.

The wildly coveted title will be awarded to just one and five others

chosen from among several hundred candidates worldwide. Sharing the recognition with an Argentinean high-altitude archeologist and an English crocodile hunter, Zollis, 34, is one of four from the United States to be chosen, and the only one from New York.

The others from the United States will be announced on page 12



Andrew Zollis

## MAYOR'S MUM

### Has no comment as girl killed by snow plow is buried, but city to pay for funeral

**By Jess Wisloski**  
The Brooklyn Papers

Nearly two weeks after a 10-year-old Red Hook girl was killed as she played on a snow bank, Mayor Michael Bloomberg has yet to offer so much as a word of sympathy to her family, either publicly or privately, say the girl's grieving family members and their lawyer.

Nevertheless, the city offered this week to pay for the girl's funeral, held last Saturday, provided the family signs a document stipulating that the payment did not imply an admission of guilt on the part of the Department of Sanitation, one of whose plows or trucks police believe accidentally killed the girl, the family's lawyer said.

Police believe Markita Weaver, the fourth-grader who was killed as she played on a snow bank the day after last month's blizzard, was likely struck by a city salt-spreader, possibly equipped with a plow, said attorney Beth Schlossman, who was hired to represent the girl's family in a potential civil suit.

"I believe they know who it is," said Schlossman.

Weaver was run over the morning of Jan. 25 outside PS 15, the elementary school she attended, at the corner of Walcott and Richards streets. Police said her younger sister, Rakeema, 9, was the primary witness to the tragic accident. Schlossman said investigators told her this week that police had recovered physical evidence but that the investigation could still take up to two months to complete.

"It was told that there was only one

See **MAYOR MUM** on page 6

Grief-stricken mother Maria Jimenez (left) leaves funeral of 10-year-old daughter Markita Weaver, who was killed by a snow plow on a Red Hook street during January's blizzard. Her funeral was held Saturday at the Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary on Richards Street at Visitation Place in Red Hook.

## Scale of park towers shocks Heights, Hill

**By Jess Wisloski**  
The Brooklyn Papers

While it may not have been the intent, a presentation Wednesday on plans to include housing as a revenue generator for the planned Brooklyn Bridge Park elicited two responses: shock and awe.

Many of the several-hundred people in attendance for the meeting at St. Francis College — largely Brooklyn Heights and Cobble Hill residents — filled the room with audible gasps when it was announced that a 30-story tower was part of the housing plan.

And while members of the Brooklyn Bridge Park Conservancy, which hosted the meeting, presented elaborate explanations as to why housing had to be included — supplemented by a slideshow showing different

park plans around the world that employ housing — people at the meeting seemed more concerned with bringing it all back home.

"I think it's a set-up job," said architect Laurie Maurer, after the meeting. "We looked at these very pretty slides that were irrelevant to us. Vancouver is a beautiful city with a striking waterfront, but it in no way relates to Brooklyn. It was a put-up job."

Maurer works in Brooklyn Heights and lives in Cobble Hill.

The meeting was held as demand grew for a more open and explanatory process in the park designs, which have been overhauled from a 2000 design that featured no housing but more active commercial uses within the park.

The meeting featured presentations from two park planners, including Matthew Ufanski, an associate of the lead Brooklyn Bridge Park designer,

Michael Van Valkenburgh, and speeches by Marianna Koval and Claude Shostak, co-executive directors of the Conservancy.

The Conservancy is a not-for-profit group that for two decades has advocated creation of a park and commercial development along a 1.3-mile stretch of the Brooklyn waterfront from the Manhattan Bridge down to Atlantic Avenue.

In the audience, residents listened intently for much of the presentation, although the auditorium half-emptied before an open question-and-answer session started. In the back of the room sat representatives from the Brooklyn Bridge Park Development Corporation — the state authority charged with planning the park and implementing those plans — including the agency's president, Wendy Leventer.

See **PARK SHOCKER** on page 4

## Wal-Mart protests begin

**By Jess Wisloski**  
The Brooklyn Papers

Standing outside local grocery stores, including Key Food supermarkets in Brooklyn Heights and Park Slope, a group of residents protested Wal-Mart on Sunday, and reports that the nation's largest retailer is looking to open a big box store in Brooklyn.

Some might call it jumping the gun, but to organizers from the new group, which they are calling, "Wal-Mart No Way," rallying Brownstone Brooklynites now is a necessary first step in

fighting off what they see as a predictable plague.

A Wal-Mart spokeswoman told The Brooklyn Papers recently that the company was "looking, not just throughout Brooklyn, but throughout the other boroughs," for places to open stores.

"I read about Wal-Mart's proposal to move into New York City," said Pete Sikora, a Park Slope who co-founded the organization. "That was a proposal to build in Rego Park [Queens], but when a Daily News story wrote about proposing a store in Downtown Brooklyn, I said 'No way!'"

Though the company rebuffed that story, which reported Wal-Mart was scouting out a site near Willoughby Street and Flatbush Avenue Extension, their denial didn't deter Sikora.

"I got fired up and called a few friends who got pissed off, too," he said. "Based on [Wal-Mart's] record it's entirely deserved."

Sikora, who lives on the burgeoning commercial strip of Fifth Avenue, said that while he had talked with friends about the Rego Park plans, it wasn't until a recent City Council hearing on Wal-Mart, where the company announced

See **WAL-MART** on page 5

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Corner of DeKalb Ave.

**Brooklyn**  
February 15, 9:00 AM  
Del Rio Diner  
166 Kings Hwy.  
Cross St./W. 12th St.

**Brooklyn-Bay Ridge**  
February 16, 9:00 AM  
Tiffany Diner  
1619 86th St.  
Cross St./99th St.

**Brooklyn**  
February 21, 6:00 PM  
Vegas Diner  
1619 86th St.  
Cross St./16th Ave.

**Brooklyn**  
February 22, 9:00 AM  
Mirage Diner  
717 Kings Hwy.  
Cross St./E. 8th St.

**Brooklyn**  
February 23, 10:00 AM  
Arch Diner  
1866 Ralph Ave.  
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**Brooklyn**  
February 25, 9:00 AM  
Kings Plaza Diner  
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**Brooklyn**  
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By UnitedHealthcare

# Atlantic Avenue mosque is said to spread hate

By Jotham Sederstrom  
The Brooklyn Papers

The Saudi Arabian government has been distributing materials preaching hatred of Jews and Christians — and calling for death to Muslims who stray from Islamic tenets — out of a mosque on Atlantic Avenue that has been linked by investigators to the funding of terrorists, according to a study released this week.

The Center for Religious Freedom, a Washington, D.C.-based organization that is part of the Freedom House human rights organization, concluded in an 89-page report that of 200 documents found at mosques across the country, many had originated from the Masjid al-Farooq, a mosque at 554 Atlantic Ave. in Boerum Hill.

In March 2003, the mosque was cited in a federal indictment as a fundraising apparatus of terrorist financiers.

In a case being heard now in federal court in Downtown Brooklyn, prosecutors charge that an alleged al-Qaeda financier, Mohammed Ali Hassan Al-Muayad, 54, used the mosque to raise and funnel millions of dollars to al-Qaeda and Hamas. Center for Religious Freedom investigators discovered, among other tracts at the mosque, a book published by the Saudi Ministry of Islamic Affairs authorizing Muslims to kill converts to Islam who commit adultery or engage in homosexuality. The author, according to the study, was Saudi Arabia's official religious leader, the late Bin Baz.

Baz's writing declares: "If a person said: I believe in Allah and confirm the truth of everything from Muhammad, except in his forbidding fornication, he becomes a disbeliever. For that, it would be lawful for Muslims to spill his blood and take his money."

Phones were disconnected at the mosque this week, and its leaders could not be reached. The research was carried out by both Muslim and non-Muslims



The Masjid al-Farooq, on Atlantic Avenue in Boerum Hill.

and two independent translators reviewed each of the documents in Arabic, the language used in 90 percent of the materials collected, said Center spokeswoman Hyne Bauer.

Among key findings, according to the report, was that most of the writings asserted a religious obligation for Muslims to hate Christians and Jews; to consider themselves a stranger behind enemy lines, and to live in the United States only to acquire new knowledge or earn money for a future jihad.

Sufi and Shiite Muslims are condemned, and most of the tracts discovered espoused Wahabism, an extreme interpretation of Islam that is the official religion of Saudi Arabia. Under the Ministry of Islamic Affairs authorizing Muslims to kill converts out of Islam be killed.

"Saudi textbooks and other publications in the collection propagate a Nazi-like hatred for Jews, treat the forged 'Protocols of the Elders of Zion' as historical fact, and avow that the Muslim's duty is to eliminate the state of Israel," the report reads. Investigators combed 15 mosques across the country, eventually collecting some 200 original documents disseminated, published or otherwise generated by the government of Saudi Arabia. Only about a quarter of those were cited in the study. Besides al-Farooq, the report cites mosques in New

Jersey, Washington, Virginia, California, Texas and Illinois.

"Not only does the government of Saudi Arabia not have a right — under the First Amendment or any other legal document — to spread hate ideology within U.S. borders, it is committing a human rights violation by doing so," said Bauer.

In his book, "American Jihad," Steven Emerson writes that the al-Farooq mosque served as the New York office for the Pakistan-based Alkhalifa Refugee Center and had been transformed around 1989 into a center for shipping funds, arms and enlisting new recruits for Jihad in Bosnia, the Philippines, Egypt, Palestine, and elsewhere.

The Alkhalifa Refugee Center, also known as the Office for Services of the Mujahideen, was a precursor to Osama bin Laden's al-Qaeda.

A former imam at the Atlantic Avenue mosque, Sheikh Omar Abdel-Rahman, was the lead conspirator in the 1993 car-bombing of the World Trade Center and in plots to blow up the United Nations, FBI offices and other New York City landmarks.

Abdel-Rahman was sentenced in 1996 to life in prison without parole.

#### Bin Laden ties

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By Randy Weingarten

As the city and the teachers' union have been trying to reach a new contract to replace the one that expired more than 1-1/2 years ago, a number of myths about the current agreement are surfacing, distractions that make it difficult to resolve the real problems of our schools.

Let me shatter a few of those myths:

Myth #1: Because of "the union" it takes forever to dismiss incompetent teachers.

Reality: Reforms negotiated in the 2002 contract cut the time it takes to adjudicate teacher discipline cases (once they are filed). Last year more than half the cases were concluded in less than three months.

The union has also proposed a program under which struggling teachers would be given help to improve, and if the assistance failed, the union would counsel them out of the profession. The Department of Education, which made supportive noises when I announced this proposal in January, 2004, has not followed up.

Myth #2: Seniority rules permit teachers with experience to constantly move to new and easier assignments, while new teachers are concentrated in the toughest schools.

Reality: Less than 1 percent of the teaching force transferred last year under seniority rules, generally to move closer to their homes. But the department had to find more than 7,000 teachers to replace those who retired, or left frustrated by low pay, overcrowded classes, lack of support by the

system, and other tough conditions.

Nor do all new teachers end up in the toughest districts. The department's own figures show that at the beginning of the last school year, three of the highest performing districts in the city, received 462 new teachers. Meanwhile only 375 new teachers went to three of the most struggling districts.

Myth #3: The union insists on lockstep pay with no recognition of special needs and circumstances.

Reality: This year we negotiated a project in the Bronx that gives additional compensation to "master teachers" — one the school system is now touting. The union assisted Chancellor Rudy Crew to design and create the Chancellor's District, a special district for struggling schools where teachers worked longer hours in exchange for higher salaries. Scores in the Chancellor's District went up dramatically, but despite national recognition as a fantastic school turnaround strategy, this successful experiment was one of the first casualties of the new administration.

Based on the success of the Chancellor's District, the union suggested earlier this year that — simultaneously with providing competitive salaries for all New

York City teachers — the system establish an Enterprise Zone where everyone willing to work at 200 selected hard-to-staff schools would receive a 15 percent differential.

The response from the Department on this suggestion? Silence.

Myth #4: "Work rules" make it impossible for schools to be managed.

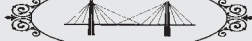
Reality: Which work rules? The one that prevents the Department from cramming more than 34 students into a high school class and 28 into fourth grade? (While these limits are still too high, it is only the fact that they are in the contract that makes the Department complicit.) Other "work rules" include allowing teachers to have lunch, or have a break after teaching three classes in a row.

#### Dealing with reality

The critical truth about our schools is that teachers have to teach the largest classes in the state, teach some of the most challenging students, work in overcrowded and sometimes unsafe buildings without proper equipment and supplies — and still make \$10,000 to \$15,000 less every year than their colleagues. Those able to retire have been doing so in droves. Nearly half of new teachers leave within six years for jobs in the suburbs or other careers.

Solving the system's real problems mean providing competitive pay and better conditions for teaching and learning in all our schools. But these are goals we can never reach as long as the city and the Chancellor continue to cling to the myths rather than reality of our schools.

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# Beat store clerk

By Jess Wisloski  
The Brooklyn Papers

A robber cleaned out the cash register of a variety store in Downtown Brooklyn on Jan. 27. The thief hid in the back of the store, at Livingston and Willoughby streets, until all the customers had cleared out, at 11:30 a.m., and then came forward, approaching the clerk and demanding whatever money was inside the cash register.

When the cashier, 32, hesitated, the man picked up a pair of scissors and demanded she open the register.

Give me what's in the cash register," he yelled. When she refused, the robber put her into a headlock and punched her in the face and head repeatedly. He then removed \$400 from the register and fled on foot toward Fulton Street.

### Hotel heist

Police say burglars stole a laptop computer from an out-of-town businessman staying at the Brooklyn Marriott for a business conference on Jan. 27.

The victim, in town from Texas, told police that his company had rented two rooms at the hotel to accommodate their meetings. One of the rooms was left unoccupied for a few hours, and when a co-worker returned to the room, around 12:35 p.m., he discovered the company's laptop was missing.

### Court St. burgle

Stealthy burglars managed to swipe four flat-screen monitors from an office building on Court Street sometime between Jan. 21 and Jan. 22. The man who discovered the theft told police he'd locked up the office, located between Montague and Remsen streets, the night of Jan. 21, and that there was nobody present when he closed up.

Upon his return, he noticed four computer monitors missing, and things had been moved around the office.

The burglars did not use force to enter the office, according to police, who are reviewing tapes from 24-hour security cameras in the lobby of the building.

### AV thief

A thief stole a multimedia projector from a classroom at the New York City College of Technology on Jan. 23 when an instructor left the room unattended for three hours, police say.

The victim, 24, said she'd left the room, in the college at the corner of Jay Street and Tech Place, at 1:15 p.m. that day, and when she returned at 4:10 p.m., the projector was gone.

The victim estimated the machine's worth at over \$1,600.

### Metrotech rob

Two brand-new laptops were stolen from a Chase employee at Metrotech sometime between Dec. 31 and Jan. 21.

The victim, 35, told police he went into his closet on the 21st floor at 11:30 a.m., and discovered the two new computers had been taken out of the boxes he had kept them in, but the boxes were still there.

According to police, 12 people have access to the keys to the closet, but the victim said he did not see anyone remove the \$3,100 computers.

### Meter made

Thieves made a quick killing on Jan. 24 when they robbed a van parked by the corner of Court and Montague streets of \$1,450 worth of construction tools.

The driver of the van came outside to pay the meter at 1:30 p.m. It was then that he noticed

## POLICE BLOTTER

the passenger-side door was open, and the property was missing. The driver told police he had no idea how long it had been open.

Among the items stolen were several saws, a hammer drill and a bag full of hand tools.

### Identity thief

An identity thief succeeded in ringing up a cellular phone bill and charging it to a Brooklyn Heights man between Dec. 21 and Jan. 14.

The victim, who lives on Grace Court near Montague Terrace, told police he received a \$774.81 phone bill for an account he didn't have.

### Easy pickin's

A nimble car thief took off in a man's work truck when he left it running with the keys in the ignition in DUMBO on Jan. 26.

The victim told police he'd left the car on the corner of Pearl and Plymouth streets at 11

p.m. to run into a building so he could punch in for work. When he went back down, his truck was gone.

Police soon spotted two suspected teenagers, 17 and 18, in the black Chevy Tahoe, arrested them and returned the car to its rightful owner.

### Baby bag pick

A pickpocket stole a woman's wallet from her baby bag near the Fulton Mall on Jan. 26.

The woman told police she was shopping in the area of Dekalb Avenue and Albee Square between 2:38 p.m. and 4:04 p.m., and then went to a McDonald's. That is when she discovered her purse missing.

The victim, 29, told police when she went to pay for her order, it was no longer in her baby's bag where she'd left it. Reported stolen was \$70 in cash, her work permit, credit cards and a Medicare card.

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## POLICE Soper beaten for iPod

By Jess Wisloski  
The Brooklyn Papers

Three men beat a man in the face repeatedly only doors away from his Park Slope home and made off with his iPod on Jan. 25.

The victim told police he was headed towards his Eighth Street home at 9:40 pm when the trio of muggers approached him near Sixth Avenue.

"Give me the iPod," demanded one mugger. When the victim hesitated, the three began punching him in the face repeatedly.

Finally the 31-year-old victim obliged, handing over the music player, which he valued at \$500.

**Music download**

In another iPod mugging, three men assaulted a 13-year-old boy at knife-point on the corner of Fourth Street and Fifth Avenue on Jan. 26.

As the boy walked home from school, at 4 pm, he was approached by a white male, about 5-foot-8 and 135 pounds, who demanded, "Give me your iPod, or I'll get my boys to [expletive] you up."

That's when the other two men approached, the second one described as black, about 5-foot-9 and 145 pounds, pulled out the knife. Behind him stood a third thug, described as black, about 6-foot and 160 pounds.

"Give me your iPod or your phone," said the second man, brandishing the knife.

The boy complied, and handed over his blue-coated iPod.

### VFW robbed

A burglar struck at a Veterans of Foreign Wars hall on 10th Street sometime between Jan. 26 at 9 pm and the next morning, at 9:30 am.

When the director, 72, opened up VFW Post 94, near Fourth Avenue, he noticed that a black case normally stocked with cigarettes and cash was missing.

Police say the burglar broke in through a front window and removed the property.

### Apple a day

A burglar pillaged a Gowanus apartment sometime during the day on Jan. 28, stealing a woman's laptop and most of her electronics.

The victim, 24, told police she'd left the Third Avenue apartment for work at 9:10 am. Upon her return to the apartment, near President Street, at 6:18 pm, she found it emptied of her DVD player, iPod, Apple laptop and all of her compact discs.

Police said the burglar appeared to have broken in through the front door, but no permanent damage was done to the door or frame.

Altogether, \$1,395 in property was reported stolen.

### Not a tow

Car thieves made off with a heavily ticketed, gray, 2001 BMW M3, making the owner wish the city had towed it in instead, as he'd initially suspected when he discovered it was missing at 2:30 pm on Jan. 29.

According to the victim, who told police the car was parked in a "No Parking" zone and had many outstanding fines due, he thought it had been towed from its spot on Fourth Street between Fifth and Sixth Avenues.

But after he was unable to track it down with the city, and contact with police turned up no records in any tow log, the victim, 31, realized the car was stolen.

### Wacky weed

Two pot-smokers attacked police who approached them at the corner of Fourth Street and Fifth Avenue on Jan. 30.

Standing on the corner enjoying their doobie, at 2:55 am, say police, the two young men lashed out as the officers, having witnessed them smoking a joint, attempted to place them under arrest.

The men, 18 and 23, were both arrested and charged with assault with intent to cause physical injury. Other charges include tampering with physical evidence, assault with cause to injure, resisting arrest and possession of an illegal substance.

### Hit twice

Burglars hit the same Park Slope apartment twice over the course of a month, a victim-tenant told police.

The victim, 29, told police he first noticed a jar of change, worth \$400, missing on Dec. 28 from his apartment on Ninth Street between Fourth and Fifth avenues.

Until Jan. 18, however, he told police he hadn't thought much of it. But that day he left his home 10:10 am, returning at 9 pm to find that his bedroom window was open. Then he saw two men leaving his apartment, who he unsuccessfully tried to catch.

They took a digital camera, worth \$220.

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## Civics demand input on park

By Jess Wisloski  
The Brooklyn Papers

A common theme is emerging from a series of meetings between the planners of Brooklyn Bridge Park and civic leaders from the neighborhoods in which the 1.3-mile waterfront development would be sited — a call for the public's voice to be heard.

Thirty or so civic and neighborhood leaders from DUMBO, Brooklyn Heights, Vinegar Hill, Cobble Hill, Boerum Hill and Carroll Gardens met Jan. 27 for the latest in a series of private "planning sessions" organized by the Brooklyn Bridge Park Development Corporation (BBPDC), this one focused on uses on and around Pier 6.

But many of the park advocates in attendance complained that the public was being ignored by the lead designer of the plan, Michael Van Valkenburgh, and by Wendy Leventer, president of the publicly funded entity that is charged with creating the park.

Saying they could not speak for all of their members the community representatives noted that because the new plans barely resemble the park plan put forth in 2000, a series of planning sessions, open to the public like those held in 1999 and 2000, should be offered.

Interpreted among the neighborhood representatives were at least nine board members and employees of the Brooklyn Bridge Park Conservancy, a not-for-profit advocacy group that fought for two decades to set the plan in motion, who cautioned dissenters that the housing was the only primary revenue source large enough to support the park, and that to veto the idea could mean the plan's demise.

But the hard-hitting discussion about lack of community accountability wasn't swayed by images of families sunning themselves, playing beach volleyball or picnicking under thatched-roof pavilions which were depicted on poster-sized renderings around the Manhattan studio of lead park designer Michael Van Valkenburgh.

"I can't take this into my meetings," said Murray Adams, president of the Cobble Hill Association. "I'm not in a position to speak for the entire

community of Cobble Hill."

Nancy Bowe, president of the Brooklyn Heights Association, agreed with Adams, adding, "In Brooklyn Heights, people have all different views of this plan." She said many relied upon "crazy rumors" and hearsay as their source of information because the BBPDC had not yet held a public meeting on the plan.

A Feb. 10 town hall-style meeting hosted by Community Boards 2 and 6, in which the park designs were to be presented to the public, was cancelled last week. That meeting has been rescheduled to 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 22, at Polytechnic University, 7 Metrotech Plaza.

"I would like to suggest we hold up on certifying the environmental impact study," said Roy Sloane, a Cobble Hill resident and member of the Citizens' Advisory Committee to the BBPDC. "The bottom line is we cannot have a meaningful conversation about Pier 6 if the representatives of [Community Board 6] are not here."

CB6 includes Cobble Hill, which will feel the impacts of any decision made on the Atlantic Avenue gateway to the park, where the large-scale housing is planned. Craig Hammerman, district manager of CB6, confirmed that the board had not yet been invited to look at the plans.

Sandy Balboa, president of the Atlantic Avenue Betterment Association, argued that they still hadn't been told why the housing was needed. "When we came here last time we had questions, and then they're not getting answered," she said. "Now we're asking questions again, and so far we're not getting any answers."

Howard Graubard, a former aide to state Sen. Martin Connor, said, "The plans that we've seen here have taken a surprise turn from what we saw in 2000. We went through a great open and public process that the community participated in — this is a far different plan. I understand this might be financially viable, but I want to see justification."

"But we have to be open to any options that come forth as a result," he added.

"Would offering options give a more inclusive feeling?" asked Van Valkenburgh.

"It's not about feeling inclusive, it's about being inclusive," replied Graubard.

## PARK SHOCKER...

Continued from page 1

The slide show, presented by Ann Breen, an urban planner from the Waterfront Center, a Washington, D.C.-based organization, showed waterfront parks from Oslo, Norway to Portland, Ore., all of which featured some form of housing, pointing out the ideal, which allowed maximum waterfront access.

One slide, of Boston's very early attempt to incorporate the waterfront into its downtown area, illustrated how haste could result in privatization.

Following Breen, a presentation by Urbanski, a presentation by Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates, detailed the density of residential housing around New York City parks. He used Central Park's surrounding high-rises as an ideal, and Flushing Meadows, in Queens, as an example of "the worst of all worlds."

Robert Moses was trying to use a highway project to build a park. "On the other hand, he said, high population density means 'there are eyes on the park. There are people out walking their dog at weird hours. People are going to and fro at all times; it introduces people to a place that wouldn't normally be.'"

But Sarah Charlton, who grew up on Grace Court, didn't think the looming tower was an answer. "It's not fair to compare this to Central Park," she said. "Central Park came into being long before those houses were built around it."

Reiterating a point made by Concord Village resident Ursula Hahn, who asked if the 30-story tower couldn't be reduced in height, Maurer suggested

"spreading the housing along Furman Street," which runs along the park's upland perimeter between Old Fulton Street and Atlantic Avenue, to meet the necessary housing revenue in several three-story buildings instead.

"It's a wonderful suggestion," said Urbanski, seeming to evade the question.

Asked if such a consideration would be ready in time for a rescheduled public meeting on the entire park plan — co-hosted by Community Boards 2 and 6 — on Feb. 22, Urbanski said, "It's an astute observation and we're going to go ahead and look at the various implications of it."

But some residents leaving the meeting felt the housing plans and 30-story tower were just the tip of the iceberg.

"My big impression is there's the towers, and there's a big green space, and it doesn't sound like anything's lined up to fill the space," said Roy Walter, a Pierpoint Street resident.

"It seems like these private-public partnerships are doing a lot of the selling points, but I'm surprised they're not presenting anything. I have no idea what this park is about yet."

There's complete lack of detail," said Walter.

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# Yassky quits fight with DA Hynes

By Jotham Sederstrom  
The Brooklyn Papers

Councilman David Yassky this week announced he will not run for Brooklyn district attorney, choosing instead to seek re-election to his Down-

town-Brooklyn Heights seat. The move quickly arrowed the large field of candidates that had lined up to contest Yassky's council seat.

At the same time, Yassky's decision could complicate Kings County District Attorney Charles

Hynes' bid for a fifth term, say political consultants who believe a crowded field would help Hynes' chances by splitting the vote across geographic and cultural lines.

"I am convinced that we in Brooklyn do need new leadership from our district attorney," Yassky said. "But I have concluded that at this time, my efforts are best directed toward building on the work I have begun in the council."

Potential candidates for the Downtown-Brooklyn Heights seat had said that their decisions to run would hinge on whether Yassky vacated the seat. Following the Jan. 31 announcement, three said they would not run in 2009, when term limits will prevent Yassky from seeking re-election.

"I'm disappointed that I won't be able to run for City Council this fall, but I hope to have a chance to run for local office in the future," said Kenneth Adams, president of the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce, who raised \$51,000 in campaign contributions, ac-

cording to Campaign Finance Board records.

To Ann Simon and Alan Fleishman, co-district leaders of the Brownstone Brooklyn-based 52nd Assembly District, also said they would not run against Yassky this year but would not rule out running for public office in the future.

The other declared candidates for Yassky's seat, Bob Zuckerman, a former president of the Stonewall Democratic Club, and Williamsburg activist Isaac Abraham, could not be reached for comment.

"I wasn't surprised," said Simon of Yassky's decision. "The longer it took for him to make up his mind, the more likely it was that he would seek re-election."

The announcement comes less than a month after Yassky was quoted in a published report saying that he had been warned by friends that Hynes had a history of prosecuting political opponents.

"When I started to think about running for DA, more than one person said to me, 'You better be clean as a whis-

te and, even if you are, you might still get indicted,'" Yassky was quoted by the New York Times on Jan. 6.

The statement was seen as an indication that Yassky was setting in for a fight with Hynes.

At least three men and women, including attorney Sandra Roper—who is among the candidates vying for Hynes' seat—have been indicted on various charges after announcing they would challenge the DA or his allies.

"The more crowded the race, the better for Hynes," said Bob Liff, a spokesman for the Kings County Democratic Committee.

"The more crowded the race, the better for Hynes," said Bob Liff, a spokesman for the Kings County Democratic Committee. "So the thinning of the field doesn't work to Hynes' benefit," said Liff.

Hynes this week announced that he had upped his campaign war chest to nearly \$700,000 following a Jan. 31 fundraiser at Mayor Michael Bloomberg's Upper East Side townhouse. Spokesman Mortimer Matz said 180 donors paid \$1,000 each at the affair.

"Councilman Yassky would have been a formidable opponent in my race for re-election,"

in the city, Maston claimed each Wal-Mart would generate "more than \$5 million in property and sales tax revenue" and more than 300 local jobs.

With 4,905 stores internationally, Wal-Mart has become the world's largest retailer, but has not yet tapped into the New York City market. They have, however, announced plans to open 300 more stores in the coming fiscal year, including the one in Queens.

"We don't have any [specific] sites in Brooklyn that we're looking at," said Wal-Mart spokeswoman Mia Masten. "We haven't ruled out anything, we just don't have any plans at this time."

Sikora said he couldn't be happier if that was the case, but he was just getting ready for what he sees as an inevitable battle.

"Hopefully, it's not a reality right now, but it might be real in a month," he said. "Certainly they're approaching New York City with multiple store proposals, so communities need to get organized now."

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## WAL-MART...

Continued from page 1  
nounced it wanted to expand not just in Queens, but the rest of the city, that he took action.

"It's bad enough to have a store in Queens, but even worse to have one in Brooklyn. In reality, what Wal-Mart does is destroy jobs and communities," he said.

Sikora and several pairs of his equally inflamed friends stood outside five local businesses Sunday, spreading themselves throughout Brooklyn Heights, Downtown Brooklyn and Park Slope, handing out fliers and urging residents to become involved by calling 311 and "telling the mayor they oppose Wal-Mart coming to New York City."

"Wal-Mart should stay out of New York City entirely, but it's particularly bad for Downtown Brooklyn, because the community is doing just fine right now," Sikora said. "Brooklyn has a brownstone culture that's incompatible with a retailer as massive and large-scale as Wal-Mart."

In testimony submitted to the council's Jan. 6 hearing on a moratorium under consideration that would disallow further development of big box stores

in the city, Maston claimed each Wal-Mart would generate "more than \$5 million in property and sales tax revenue" and more than 300 local jobs.

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# Yemeni defendants taped talking codes, kinship to Bin Laden

Associated Press

A Yemeni sheik was recorded tutoring his personal assistant about code words for weapons and ammunition on secret surveillance tapes that Wednesday became some of the most potentially damaging government evidence in a high-profile terror funding trial.

The two men were recorded talking alone after meeting in a German hotel with two FBI informants posing as militant Islamists who needed help donating \$2.5 million to Hamas and al-Qaeda. The four men discussed splitting the funds between the terrorist groups and al-Qaeda's charities in Yemen. The two are charged with using the Masjid al-Farooq, a mosque on Atlantic Avenue, between Third and Fourth avenues in Boerum Hill, to funnel millions of dollars to al-Qaeda and Hamas, and conducting illicit dealings at nearby businesses. Worshipers frequently gave money without knowing

its destination, but the al-Farooq mosque has long been a suspected hotbed of terrorist-related activity, law enforcement sources said.

Sheik Mohammed Ali Hasan al-Muayyad told his assistant, Mohammed Mohsen Yahya Zayed, that if Zayed wanted to buy ammunition he could say, "By God Sheik Mohammed, we wish to buy corn. The corn is running low. Should we buy it or what?"

For weapons, al-Muayyad told Zayed he could use the word "peels," a type of tool used in their charity bakery in Yemen, according to a government translation of the Arabic conversation played for jurors Wednesday in federal court in Downtown Brooklyn.

For example, if they want, uh, weapons, "By God Sheik Mohammed, the workers at the bakery want ... they're waiting for ... what you call it? Peels. They want peels for the dough," al-Muayyad said.

Prosecutors describe al-Muayyad as a longtime support-

er of Osama bin Laden and Palestinian militant groups. Defense lawyers argue that al-Muayyad and Zayed were dazzled by the promise of funding for their charities and said what they believed the informants wanted to hear about funneling funds to terrorists.

That defense was dealt an apparent blow Wednesday by tapes that included the corn and peels discussion. The recordings went on to lay out what appeared to be elaborate plans to conceal the movement of the informants' funds into Yemen.

Al-Muayyad also told the informants about his role as president of the Yemeni chapter of Al-Aqsa Charitable Organization, which the government contends is a front for Palestinian terrorists. And he described his friendship with the assistant of a radical cleric from Qatar who terrorism experts have said condoned attacks on Americans and Jews.

Al-Muayyad's words may counter the defense argument that he had no involvement

with terrorism before he was entrapped by the government informants.

The sheik also describes his relationship with bin Laden.

He called me his sheik. He used to say that I'm his sheik," Mohammed Ali Hasan al-Muayyad said bin Laden on the tapes secretly recorded in a German hotel room. "I used to teach him some of the Islamic laws."

Al-Muayyad described his relationship with bin Laden as limited to the days before the al-Qaeda leader attacked U.S. interests.

"I sat with him before all these crises happened — a long time ago," al-Muayyad said in Arabic.

But the Yemeni cleric went on to describe ongoing relationships with Hamas leader Khaled Masha'al and other militants. He also talked of his support for the families of Islamic "martyrs."

"Whoever we find out has become a martyr, we try to set aside an amount of money for his family," al-Muayyad said.

## Park plan has gone too far

To the editor:

To those not directly in the path of the Brooklyn Bridge Park planners, it may come as a surprise that the (Brooklyn Bridge Park Development Corporation) has routinely acted so aggressively and arrogantly ("Pols seek a unified front over park," Jan. 29).

One could hope that, perhaps, BBPDC has overplayed its hand in revealing its waterfront housing plan. After all, it's never good to embarrass your political allies. They actually seem surprised at the critical storm that's erupted.

When we in the Willowton community (in Brooklyn Heights) aired our concerns about the commercial thrust of the plan over two years ago, we became the target of gratuitous

## LETTERS

charges of being anti-development and even racist, and, unfortunately, have largely pulled back from that unpleasantness.

As this debate plays itself out, we may finally see whose agenda prevails, and whether Brooklyn Bridge Park becomes a "world-class" city park, or a world-class developers' windfall.

—Robert Stone, Brooklyn Heights

## Dolphins suffer at aquariums

To the editor:

I am writing in response to your Jan. 22 article, "20M shark

house set for Aquarium." The aquarium is not the happy place that people make it out to be. Aquariums are billion-dollar businesses built on the suffering of intelligent, social beings who are denied all their natural behaviors and needs.

For example, in the wild, dolphins swim up to 100 miles a day. But captured dolphins are confined to tanks that may be only 24 feet long, 24 feet wide and 6 feet deep. They navigate by echolocation — bouncing sonar waves off other objects to determine their shape, density, distance and location — but in tanks, the reverberations from their own sonar bounce off the walls, driving some dolphins insane.

Jacques Cousteau said that life for a captive dolphin leads

to a confusion of the entire sensory apparatus, which in turn causes in such a sensitive creature a derangement of mental balance and behavior.

It has been documented that, in the wild, dolphins can live into their 40s and 50s. But more than 80 percent of captive dolphins whose ages could be determined died before the age of 20. Please tell people not to visit aquariums.

Encourage the aquarium to stop breeding animals to make space for rehabilitating (and releasing) injured wildlife. Tell officials to avoid subsidizing these facilities with taxpayer money. Support legislation that prohibits the capture or restricts the display of these animals.

—Victoria Booth, Bay Ridge

## MAYOR MUM...

Continued from page 1

salt truck in the area and that there was physical evidence," said Schlossman.

"I have yet to see any entity pay a funeral bill when they don't feel they're responsible," said the lawyer.

Mayoral spokesman Jordan Barowitz offered condolences, but acknowledged that the mayor himself had not spoken publicly about the death, or to the family in private.

"It's a terrible tragedy," said Barowitz. "I know the mayor's Community Assistance Unit has been meeting with the family and assisting the family, and the police department has been taking on an investigation."

Schlossman said that aside from an appearance at the wake, no community assistance representative had reached out to them.

"They have not been meeting with the family," said the lawyer. "I have called several times." She said none of her calls were returned.

"I think [the family] is entitled to an apology and I think it would help in terms of closure to know who exactly struck their daughter," she said.

Witnesses say that at 3 p.m. Weaver was sitting on a snow bank pulling plastic bags over her sneakers to play in the foot-deep snow, when a city sanitation truck plowing snow turned the corner and struck her.

Unconscious and bleeding, the little girl was rushed to Long Island College Hospital, where she died soon after. It was the same hospital in which she was born, on April 26, 1994.

Citing the ongoing investigation, the Department of Sanitation has declined to comment on the tragedy.

Responding to Schlossman's suit-spreader claim, Paul Browne, the police department's deputy commissioner for public information, told The Brooklyn Papers, "There's witnesses who describe a white truck, others describe orange. If you're familiar with Sanitation, usually their plows — the white sanitation trucks — go first, followed by an orange truck that salts or sands. What we learned is that Sanitation essentially creates sectors, and they'll assign a number of vehicles in that area to continuously cover that continuous area."

He said the truck that hit Weaver could be either a salter or garbage truck with a plow.

"In this case we've narrowed it to four potential vehicles, and we're conducting interviews as well as forensic examinations," Browne said. The NYPD Highway Patrol is leading the investigation.

Weaver's funeral Mass was offered at the Church of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, on Richards Street at Visitation Place, just blocks from the fatal accident.

More than 200 mourners turned out to mourn the charismatic youngster's tragic death.

"This is not what God wanted," said Brooklyn's Auxiliary Bishop Rene Valero. "But it is what happened."

Maria Jimenez, Weaver's mother, grabbed her eldest son, Jesse, in a desperate embrace. He held her tightly for several minutes, as she buried her face in his shoulder.

"Your little girl is with God the Father," assured Valero. "She will be up there watching us, and will wait there for us."

The eldest daughter, Puquana, in a bright white suit, stood in the back of the church, fighting back tears and watching with a somber expression. Only once before the service ended did she dart forward protectively as the bishop approached the draped casket where her little sister's body lay. She tensed as incense was shaken near the coffin and shook her head.

Outside, Maria Jimenez clutched the hands of Ronald Weaver, Markita's father, and her son, who stood on either side of her as they helped her unsteadily walk down the stairs and into a waiting limousine.

Six men loaded Weaver's small coffin into a hearse headed for the Rosehill Cemetery in Linden, N.J.

Mable McConey, a neighbor who lived five floors below the Weavers said she saw Markita every day in the elevator after walking her dog, Jojo, who Markita loved.

"I still think they should find the driver who did this," said McConey. "He had to notice."

"If it happened to any child I'd feel bad," said McConey, who said she thought of Weaver as a grandchild, "but it happened to a child I knew. I was devastated when I found out."

Rakeema, Markita Weaver's 9-year-old sister, who witnessed the accident, has still not been to school.

"We are seeking treatment for her," said Schlossman. "She really hasn't spoken about it."

Those who wish to help the family can send donations to the Markita Weaver Fund, c/o Sal Monaco, The Signature Bank, 26 Court St., Brooklyn, NY 11242.

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The Brooklyn Papers' essential guide to the Borough of Kings

February 5, 2005



# Fact vs. fiction

*'Assisted Living' director sets comic film in real facility, with seniors who live there*

By Lisa J. Curtis  
GO Brooklyn Editor

Rather than being elated about his award-winning movie, "Assisted Living," which opened at the Angelika Film Center this week, Prospect Heights filmmaker Elliot Greenbaum is exhausted. In lieu of sleep, the 27-year-old Greenbaum had spent the previous evening trying to get a damaged film reel replaced in time for a press screening. And this was just the latest hiccup in the 5-year-long saga that has been the story of bringing his first film to theaters.

"It's not a labor of love anymore," Greenbaum dryly told GO Brooklyn in an interview at his local burger joint, City Lighting. "It's a day to complete something. It's a good movie. I've been around it a long time, but other people haven't seen it — aside from film festivals, so it's time for them to see it."

Directed and written by Greenbaum, "Assisted Living" concerns a young man, Todd, who doesn't take his life or job at an assisted living facility for the elderly too seriously. In fact, Todd often takes breaks to self-medicate (with marijuana) and makes the days go faster by coming in late, rolling around in wheelchairs and making phony phone calls to the seniors' impersonating god.

"The main character is basically just me," said Greenbaum. "It tracks [the character's] transformation from childhood to adulthood in the course of a day. He starts off the film trying to remain distant from his world by turning it into a comic abstraction. He plays games with people. He makes pictures in his head that

## CINEMA

"Assisted Living" by Elliot Greenbaum is now playing at the Angelika Film Center (18 West Houston between Broadway and Mercer Street in Manhattan). Tickets are \$10.50, \$7 (seniors 62 and older). For more information, call (212) 995-2000 or visit the Web site [www.angelikafilmcenter.com](http://www.angelikafilmcenter.com) or [www.assistedlivingfilm.com](http://www.assistedlivingfilm.com).

seem weird and interesting... He plays games with the residents. They're not real people to him, just objects. He tries to have as much fun as he can and serve himself well."

While his irreverent antics are humorous, Todd (played by Michael Bonsignore) is clearly frittering away his youth while the patients are marching toward death's door. Despite the odds, Todd strikes up a reluctant friendship with Mrs. Pearlman (Maggie Riley) who is longing desperately for a change of scenery — at the very least. She hopes her son will rescue her from the dull loneliness of life in this relatively pleasant institution with its droning TV sets and bingo games and lessons from a monkey handpuppet.

Although it has taken Greenbaum's indie film a long time to hit the big screen, it doesn't mean that the folks who have seen it didn't appreciate it. "Assisted Living" won the 2003 Slamdance Film Festival's Grand Jury Prize, as well as grand jury prizes at that year's GenArt Film Fest, Woodstock Film Fest and Savannah Film Fest. And just because Greenbaum is bemoaning his sleepless night and the weather ("Are you cold? I'm cold."), it



Senior moment: (Above left) Todd (played by Michael Bonsignore) and Mrs. Pearlman (played by Maggie Riley) enjoy a game of Scrabble in Elliot Greenbaum's film "Assisted Living." The director (above), who enjoys blurring the lines between reality and artifice, insists on being photographed while actually eating his burger at City Lighting on Flatbush Avenue.

doesn't mean he's not pointing out the hilarious budge he's wearing with photos of his film's two stars wearing gigantic dark plastic sunglasses (post-myriad-specs, for those in-the-know).

There was a hubbub about it at one point. Greenbaum recalled about his rollercoaster ride as a first-time indie filmmaker: "The distributor went bankrupt, and that's why it didn't come out last year. So [2004] has had some drag-like characteristics psychologically."

After describing his distributor's financial problems as being the "nadir" of his love affair with "Assisted Living," he quickly explained that the experience was an opportunity for him "to learn about distribution and to try to take on the challenge of beating out pessimistic, manipulative, dishonest big companies that trick people into going and seeing their bad products."

Make no mistake that Greenbaum enjoys a challenge. He shot his film under "excruciatingly bizarre conditions, sometimes without a script" in five different nursing homes in Kentucky, with most of the footage shot at the Masonic Homes of Kentucky assisted living facility.

"I didn't audition anyone. I was just recommended some actors in Louisville. I would talk with them and then I would write scenes that matched the way they talk and act, so it wasn't

hard," Greenbaum said with a chuckle.

In addition to the actors in key roles, he also filmed the actual residents, who appear remarkably relaxed in the final product. All of which begs the question, how much of the film is real and how much is fiction?

"I did want to show how strange the real world is," said Greenbaum. "So whenever I use documentary material it was always at the service of reawakening the viewer to the kind of bizarre and bewildering reality of this world. If you look at it carefully, things you take for granted are unfathomably weird. The documentary material, I hope, has an effect of giving a lot of traction to the fiction, giving it a lot of support."

And while the film takes pictures of "real" people and "real" settings, Greenbaum takes pride in blurring the boundaries between genres.

"It's not shot documentary-style either; it just takes pictures of things that are real," said Greenbaum. "But it doesn't do that with a shaky camera — or I don't know what the genre tropes are these days to make things look like a documentary. The documentary material is done in a very stately way that co-mingles with the fiction so that you can't tell what's real and what's not real when you watch the movie."

See ASSISTED on page 11

## MUSIC

### New Year songs



Music From China

The group, Music From China (pictured), will perform traditional Chinese instruments at the Central Library on Feb. 6, during Brooklyn Public Library's Chinese New Year celebration, in the second-floor meeting room at Grand Army Plaza. Other performers on the program include folk dancer Mary Yuen, magician Li Ying and acrobat Wang Hong. This event, which takes place from 2:30 pm to 4 pm, is free and open to the public. For more information, call (718) 230-2100.

## TV



### Freedom ride

East New York resident Miguel Dominguez plays the role of Titus in the new PBS series, "Slavery and the Making of America," which premieres on Sunday. The series, narrated by Morgan Freeman, chronicles the institution of American slavery from its origins in 1619 through Reconstruction using interviews with scholars as well as performances by actors who bring to life the heroes who resisted their shackles.

Among these historical rebels is Titus, a New Jersey slave bound to Quaker John Corlies, in the 1760s. (His exploits are recounted in the series' second hour, "Liberty in the Air.") While other Quakers taught their slaves to read and write and gave them their freedom at age 21, Corlies refused Titus both. So Titus joined up with the British troops after Lord Dunmore, the royal governor of Virginia, promised freedom to blacks who enlisted.

After he rose to the rank of Colonel, Titus rode into New Jersey as the leader of a band of guerrilla raiders who conducted operations for the British, attacked and plundered the homes of their former masters and liberated their friends and family.

Born in the Dominican Republic, Dominguez, 19, was raised in East New York, where he learned to ride horses as a member of the Federation of Black Cowboys. It was out of those East New York stables that he learned to ride a horse with as much assurance and pride as the real Col. Tye, who was killed in battle at age 26.

"My neighborhood was really bad," Dominguez told GO Brooklyn. "Having the stables was heaven on Earth."

Dominguez said acting in the series was a great experience, although he was initially intimidated by the prospect of improvising much of the role. "You learn so much," said Dominguez. "You learn about that [character]. After it was finished, I saw things from a different perspective."

"Slavery and the Making of America" will premier on PBS Feb. 9 and 16, from 9 to 11 pm.

— Lisa J. Curtis

## CINEMA

### Love & Haiti

Filmmaker Karen Kramer (pictured) will introduce two of her movies as part of Long Island University's Feb. 9 conference, "Haiti: Rites of Passage." Kramer's films, "Legacy of the Spirit," a documentary about the religion of Vodou, and "Breaking Leaves," a portrait of peasant applications of herbal remedies will be screened at 1:15 pm at the University Learning Center, Room 116.



The daylong conference events are free, open to the public and seating is on a first-come, first-served basis. For a complete schedule of events call Noel Hall at (718) 488-3355. LIU's Brooklyn campus is located at the corner of Flatbush Avenue Extension and DeKalb Avenue in Downtown Brooklyn.

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# BROOKLYN Heights Neighborhood Dining Guide

**This week:  
DEKALB AVENUE**

## Butta' Cup

271 Adelphi St. at DeKalb Avenue, (718) 522-1669 (AmEx, DC, Disc, MC, Visa) Entrees: \$11-\$30.

Set in a Fort Greene brownstone, Mike "Milo" Odom's seductive lounge is decorated with sexy leopard prints and vintage furniture. Start with something spicy — jerk wings or the Cantonese-style salt-and-pepper jumbo shrimp. Chef Francisco Pastrejon's "Asian soul" menu includes customer favorites like the salmon Japanese Uf Big Daddy's fried chicken, sweet potato pie, apple pie, or homemade red velvet cake. But don't limit yourself to just the food. Butta' Cup's two bars serve some of the coolest cocktails around and all-you-can-eat brunch on Sundays. "Blunch," or brunch and lunch, is served weekdays. Garden seats available in season. Open daily from 11 am until 2 am.

## Chez Oskar

211 DeKalb Ave. at Adelphi Street, (718) 852-6250, www.chezoskar.com, (AmEx, Disc, MC, Visa) Entrees: \$14-\$19.

Chez Oskar offers some of the best French bistro fare — with hints of the Caribbean — in Brooklyn. And what goes better with owner Denis Coste's delicious French pastries than a bottle of wine from an affordable list? Whether you choose the escargot, the lamb shank with coucous or the steak frites, the Bourgeois chocolate cake is a perfect ending. Brunch is served Saturdays and Sundays from 11 am to 4 pm. Sidewalk cafe seats available weather permitting. Open daily for lunch and dinner.

## I-Shebeen Madiba

195 DeKalb Ave. at Carlton Avenue, (718) 855-9190, www.i-shebeen.com (AmEx, Disc, MC, Visa) Entrees: \$12-\$22.

Stepping into Madiba is like bursting into the Kaibab. Silvery interior canopies, wooden bar



Mussels at Chez Oskar.

and pillow-topped benches transport you to a fantastic getaway. Madiba has a South African menu with exotic dishes and a state-of-the-art wine list. Chef-owner Mark Heneghan's unique South African recipes include the Durban samosas stuffed in local vegetable patties with spicy pickled mango, "potjie braai" (a slow-cooked stew served in a three-legged, cast-iron pot) and ostrich carpaccio with marinated sweet peppers. Desserts include the Klipdrift brandy tart and Jenny's make pudding (a classic South African dessert served with caramel sauce and vanilla ice cream). Terrace seats available. Open daily.

## Junior's

386 Flatbush Ave. at DeKalb Ave. (718) 852-5257, www.juniorsdiner.com (AmEx, Disc, MC, Visa) Entrees: \$9.25-\$28.95.

Opened in 1950, Junior's diner is a Brooklyn landmark named for founder Harry Rosen's sons



Abbreviation Key: AmEx=American Express, DC=Diner's Club, Disc=Discover Card, MC=MasterCard, Visa=Visa Card

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Mo-Bay serves tropical drinks and "rummy-rum cake."

Walter and Marvin, and boasts what might be the most famous cheesecake in America. But Junior's makes more than just a dozen varieties of cheesecake. Have you tried their cookies, croissants or challah? Mondays through Thursdays, from 6:30 pm until closing, Junior's offers a \$14.95 prix fixe meal including a fresh fruit cup or soup of the day, tossed green salad, a choice of entrees, including roast half spring chicken, meat loaf, and Hungarian beef goulash, and a choice of select desserts and soda, coffee or tea. Owners Alan and Kevin Rosen ship their cheesecakes anywhere in the United States (call 800-9-JUNIOR), so if you haven't indulged, you've got no excuse — no matter where you live. Open Sunday through Wednesday from 6 am to 12:30 am, Thursday from 6 am to 1 am, and Fridays and Saturdays from 6:30 am to 2:30 am.

## Lou Lou

222 DeKalb Ave. at Clermont Avenue, (718) 246-0633 (AmEx, MC, Visa) Entrees: \$14-\$18.

Lou Lou has a cozy atmosphere with rustic tables, exposed brick walls and a lovely garden. A signature dish from chef William Snell's French menu is his seafood bouillabaisse in a coconut curry broth. Snell also recommends the divers sea scallop crepe in a vermouth and Portobello cream sauce. A \$19 three-course prix fixe menu is offered Mondays through Thursdays. On 2-for-1 Thursdays, get two entrees for the price of one, and on Mondays, enjoy a free corkage fee. Brunch is served Saturdays and Sundays, from 11 am to 3 pm. Open daily from 5:30 pm-11 pm, Fridays from 5:30 pm-midnight.

## Mo-Bay Restaurant

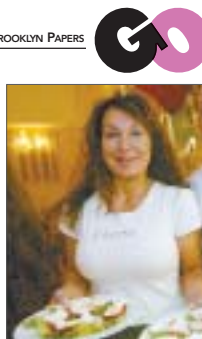
112 DeKalb Ave. at Ashland Place, (718) 246-2800, www.mobayrestaurant.com (AmEx, DC, Disc, MC, Visa) Entrees: \$8.75-\$16.75.

If Caribbean soul and vegetable food are what you crave, then Mo-Bay restaurant is the place to be. Mo-Bay's beach hut interior, fresh-cut flowers and reggae music give the place a cool, island vibe. Owner Sheron Barnes' popular dishes include the curry coconut salmon, brown-stewed chicken and oxtail stew. For vegetarians, there's the brown-stewed "veggie" chicken, curry "veggie" chicken, barbeque "veggie" chicken and "veggie" salmon (made from soy protein). The dessert menu offers Mo-Bay's famous "rummy rum cake," vanilla cake soaked in three types of rum and served warm with vanilla ice cream — a slice of heaven. Daily luncheon specials, Open weekdays from 11 am to 11 pm, Saturdays from noon to 11 pm, and Sundays from 3 pm to 10 pm.

## Sugarhill Supper Club

615 DeKalb Ave. at Nostrand Avenue, (718) 797-1727 (AmEx, Disc, MC, Visa) Entrees \$9.95-\$24.95.

Opened in 1993, this restaurant serves up Southwestern cuisine, and if you're hungry on a late weekend night, it's open 24 hours on Fridays and Saturdays. With a nightclub downstairs and three full bars, things are kept lively. Manager Akasha Freeman recommends the popular crab cakes. Live entertainment performs four nights a week. Open Mondays and Thursdays from 8 am to 10:30 pm, Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 8 am to 7 pm, and continuously from Friday at 8 am until Sunday at 7 pm.



# Nostalgic noshing

**Laura's Gourmet Restaurant  
offers classic Italian dishes**

By Lisa J. Curtis  
C2C Brooklyn Editor

One of the many great aspects of living in Brooklyn is that you can still find family-run restaurants that place a premium on consistently preparing recipes passed down through generations. The owners remember you, because they actually work the dining room, and after a few visits, you feel as affectionately about them as you do about your great-aunt Florence.

At these restaurants, you don't have to worry about the labels on your clothes, or paying too much for a trendy "saketen," or if your grandmother will be as comfortable eating there as much as you do.

When you go to Laura's Gourmet Restaurant, in Windsor Terrace, which has been serving their classic Italian fare for more than 20 years, you are graciously welcomed. The staff includes owner Laura Leone, manager Jaennette (her daughter) and chef Sal (her husband), and they're all confident about how the dishes taste, the freshness of their ingredients and their authenticity. Leone says her family makes regular trips to Italy to pick up hard-to-find ingredients. All that's left is customer service, which is easy for the effusive Leone, who makes spot-on wine recom-

## DINING

Laura's Gourmet Kitchen (1235 Prospect Ave. at New York in Windsor Terrace) accepts American Express, Discover, MasterCard and Visa. Entrees: \$9-\$22. The restaurant serves dinner Tuesdays through Sundays. A \$16.50 prix fixe dinner menu is offered Sundays, and Tuesdays through Thursdays. Closed Mondays. Open for Valentine's Day, Monday, Feb. 14. For reservations, call (718) 456-5715.

mendations and generally bubbles over with enthusiasm.

She recently spruced up the restaurant's decor with dramatic velvet drapes and fresh paint. ("I'm a dancer, so I like it to look like a theater," Laura said earnestly in her heavily accented English.) Although Laura's does sport linen tablecloths and glittering chandeliers reminiscent of the Metropolitan Opera, the restaurant, with its open kitchen, is comfortably informal.

Laura's menu of antipasti, soups, salads, pastas, brick oven pizzas, seafood and meat entrees has remained constant, but she frequently offers special holiday menus, including a \$35 prix-fixe four-course Valentine's Day dinner, beginning with a champagne cocktail, for Monday, Feb. 14. While the price seems remarkably low on a day when most



(Above left) Laura's Gourmet Restaurant owner Laura Leone and daughter Jaennette Leone, the restaurant's manager, serve up a feast. (Above) Chef Sal Leone's "Bocconcini," chicken stuffed with shrimp in a cognac sauce made with a stock of portobello and porcini mushrooms.

restaurants gleefully gouge customers, it's a typical strategy for Leone. Her goal is simply to please her customers. She doesn't even feel self-pity over having to work on holidays.

"I don't mind, because I'm surrounded by family and nice people," said Leone. "Some of our recipes originate from the Genovese region of Italy, where my mother [Rosetta Forconi] and I come from, some from Tuscany where my father is from, and some from Sicily, where my husband comes from."

Sal is joined in the kitchen by chef Giorgio, who has been with the restaurant for more than 15 years; and Forconi's fantastic contributions to the menu include mushroom ravioli in cream sauce and the "grandmother's cake."

Whether it's the lemon in the water or the charmingly mix-and-matched plates or fresh flowers on the tables, the details are attended to here. The basics, such as Forconi's early porcini and

portobello mushroom ravioli or the light, housemade gnocchi with bright-green pesto sauce, are so good they're memorable.

Laura's also offers thin-crust pizzas fresh from her wood-burning oven. Her margherita pizza — served on a white platter with pretty blue flowers — with fresh mozzarella, fresh tomatoes and basil would give Grimaldi's a run for its money.

While an entree of prosciutto stuffed with not-so-fresh shrimp in a salty brown gravy missed its mark on this evening, Sal's chicken in a complex cognac cream sauce with mushrooms and red peppers was a nostalgic trip down memory lane. It tasted like the chicken a la king of my youth. Among the list of vegetables served as side dishes, the garlicky, sautéed fresh zucchini was served in a giant heap that we continued to enjoy the next day.

For dessert, ask Laura for her recommendations. We were thrilled with the gorgonzola, with its buttery texture, that she paired with a sweet pear and the aforementioned grandmother's cake, a lemony custard tort with pine nuts that was a refreshing pick-me-up after our feast.

For a light meal of wine and pizza, or a four-course extravaganza, Laura's continues to offer great Italian classics for all occasions.

# More than booze

What's the story with the term "gastropub"? I've seen it in newspapers twice in two weeks. It sounds like the name of the condition you're in the day after a long night of bar cruising.

The definition, if you're not hip to the latest culinary slang, is a bar or pub with good food.

The latest gastropub is Spike Hill, which opened in Williamsburg in September.

According to the pub's chef, Brett Ackerman (pictured), Spike Hill is the name of the owners' family property in Ireland; proprietors Tom Kenney and Tom Schmitz are cousins.

Meanwhile, "gastropub," explains Ackerman, "originates in London, when pub owners began to employ chefs who could do more than fry fish and chips."

So can Ackerman, whose most recent stint was at Williamsburg's Diner. His fryer is at work here, dishing out big portions of that Brit delicacy, but he's also serving up burgers, a grilled steak, chicken stew and Irish fry-up: blood sausage, bacon and baked beans topped with poached eggs. More refined dishes include a sea bass with a panko breadcrumb crust.

To sweeten the evening,

Ackerman offers a warm chocolate brownie with chocolate whipped cream and a caramelized apple cobbler.

And, says Ackerman, "In addition to a great beer selection, we have the best single malt Scotch and Irish whiskey around."

— Tina Barry

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# Slamdance vs. Sundance

Brooklyn filmmakers debate the pros & cons — and swag

By Marian Masone  
for The Brooklyn Papers

Park City, Utah — It starts on the plane. The guy across the aisle on the early morning flight out of JFK to Salt Lake City is reading Jonathan Lethem's "Fortress of Solitude." You can take 'em out of Brooklyn, but you can't take Brooklyn out of ... well, you know how it goes.

Last month's Sundance Film Festival cranked out another edition peppered with Brooklynites. While there were many films from all over the country that will probably make appearances on screens large (director-writer Craig Brewer's "Hustle & Flow" seems a likely contender for wide release) and small (Jessica Sanders' documentary, "After Innocence," is already slated for cable sometime this year), it's likely that we'll also see work by our neighbors on these same screens within the year.

(Last year, Williamsburg resident Joshua Marston's film "Maria Full of Grace" — the audience favorite in 2004 — wound up making quite a stir: among many other prizes, he won the New York Film Critics Circle award for best first feature and the lead actress, Catalina Sandino Moreno, has been nominated for an Academy Award. Not a bad year's work.)

Noah Baumbach's latest film "The Squid and the Whale" is a cinematic take on the filmmaker's youth in Park Slope. With great performances by Laura Linney and Jeff Daniels as parents going through a painful separation and Jesse Eisenberg and Owen Kline as the sons caught in the middle, the film was shot in Brooklyn and makes an immediate connection with the audience, not only geographically, but emotionally. It is a powerful and heartfelt portrait of divorce. At the end of the festival, Baumbach — who also authored "The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou" and directed and penned 1995's "Kicking and Screaming" — walked away with jury awards for directing and writing.

"Loggerheads" is former Brooklyn resident Tim Kirkman's handsomely written story of three separate lives that may or may not connect over time. A winning cast — Chris Sarandon, Bonnie Hunt, Tess Harper and Michael Learned — help make this subtle film



'Love' the attention: "Love, Ludlow" (above), directed by Carroll Gardens resident Adrienne Weiss (at right), was featured in the Sundance Film Festival's American Spectrum section in January.



work. Both "The Squid and the Whale" and "Loggerheads" screened in the American Dramatic competition. The Duplass brothers — Mark (of Greenpoint) and Jay (of Williamsburg), who were here last year with their short "Scrubble," made a return trip this year with their first feature-length film, "The Puffy Chair." It didn't take them long to start the march up the film food chain with their film's appearance in the American Spectrum section of the festival.

Also in the American Spectrum section was "Love, Ludlow," directed by Carroll Gardens resident Adrienne Weiss. Weiss' film, about three lonely individuals who learn to connect emotionally, is this stage director's film debut. In an e-mail interview with GO Brooklyn, she wrote about the differences between directing for the stage and for celluloid.

"For me, the most exciting thing about film acting vs. stage acting is the immediacy and intimacy of film," said

Weiss. "You're going for a genuine connection between the actors, and you can capture it up close and completely spontaneously when you're working with a camera. There's an element of surprise and spontaneity that I find thrilling."

For a first-time filmmaker, Weiss had a relatively easy time getting started. "The project came about in a kind of magical and unexpected way," she said. "I had another project I was getting ready to do, and out of the blue I got a phone call from a former student of mine, Ruben O'Malley, a wonderful DP [director of photography] and fellow Brooklynite. He told me he'd been hired to shoot the project. There was a script, the financing and the start date, but no director. As it was based on a play, they were looking for someone who was good with actors, and so he thought of me." Weiss is a former adjunct professor to New York University's graduate film program who now teaches workshops in New York and Los Angeles.

"I read the script, thought there was something there, and shortly after was hired to direct it," she said. "I worked with the writer for about two weeks on a re-write, and then we went into pre-production! I still can't believe it was that easy to do my first feature. I feel very fortunate."

This is Weiss' first time at Sundance and all was going well for her. "It's great to connect to other filmmakers, and also really be introduced to the industry. Our first screening went amazingly well, and our producer is talking to distributors." The Sundance festival is working as it should for Weiss.

**Brooklyn at Slamdance**  
While the Sundance Film Festival takes place at many venues throughout the suburban town of Park City, the Slamdance Film Festival uses two smaller and funkier theaters to ply its wares. Eleven years ago, this upstart festival was a reaction to the Hollywoodization of Sundance. Although

it's still more edgy than Sundance (in one room, the video projector sits on the floor), the organization has about as many sponsors as does Sundance and they give their filmmakers loads of "swag" — just like their wealthier cousins at Sundance. (For the uninitiated, swag is the free stuff — the gift bags.)

Slamdance also has their own publicity department, which sends out press releases whenever a film is sold to a distributor. But they can be forgiven this cross bit of business, because, after all, getting films seen are the reason film festivals exist. By getting publicity and distributors for these films, the festival helps to get the films seen by even more people.

I ventured over to Slamdance (for the first time) to see work by a number of Brooklyn filmmakers who were making their mark there.

Don Bernier, also of Carroll Gardens, was on hand at Slamdance to present his documentary "In a Nutshell." This film documents the trials and tribulations of artist Elizabeth Tashjian.

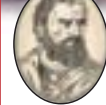
Raised in New York, Tashjian moved to Old Lyme, Conn. with her mother, with whom she lived until her late 40s, when her mother died. She began painting at the National Academy of Design in New York in 1931. Her work consisted almost entirely of still lifes, and all contained images of nuts.

See **SUNDANCE** on page 10

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Not so tragic: Included in the Slamdance Film Festival "Tragedy: The Story of Queensbridge," directed by Becker Sim, of Williamsburg, and produced by Malcolm Heard, of Fort Greene, played to a full house of hip-hop fans in Salt Lake City.

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## SUNDANCE...

Continued from page 9

Tashjian was so obsessed with them that she opened a nut museum in her home. When Tashjian became old and ill, she became a ward of the state against her will.

Bernier's lovely, touching film asks the question, was he really "nuts" or just an eccentric artist? "In a nutshell" speaks to issues of age and gender as well.

Bernier chatted with the audience after a screening of the film and told GO Brooklyn that he became acquainted with Elizabeth a few years ago and put aside his avant-garde tendencies to make a straightforward documentary. (Bernier's experimental work has been shown in the New York Video Festival.)

"I still love the idea of a small screen," he said. Consequently he's looking into screening it on public television. In the meantime, he has been having fun in Park City. "Good swag bags," he volunteered.

Documentaries about musicians abounded at both festivals. Philip Di Fiore, of Brooklyn Heights, discovered the subject of his film "Stranger: Bernie Worrell on Earth" at his New Jersey high school.

"He was the father of a kind of mine," Di Fiore said. "A friend managed the football team. I just knew him as Mr. Worrell who would pick up his son after school." It turns out there was much more to the man. Bernie Worrell is a keyboardist extraordinaire, who worked with such music luminaries as Talking Heads, George Clinton and Mos Def. A child prodigy who studied classical music,

he found his way to popular forms, including his own group, P-Funk. But for all Worrell's talent, he owned none of the music he wrote.

Filled with interviews of some of the best and the brightest of rock, funk and rap, "Stranger: Bernie Worrell on Earth" is an indictment of racism and corruption in the music business, but also a lovely portrait of a forgotten genius. Bernie Worrell himself showed up and played with George Clinton for the closing night party on Jan. 28.

**Tragedy: The Story of Queensbridge** covers the hip-hop scene that stems from a Queens housing project. Directed by Booker Sim, of Williamsburg, and produced by Malcolm Heard, of Fort Greene, the film scans the life and times of rap artist Tragedy (aka Percy Chapman) and a host of other rappers. It's a gritty film, brimming with life, loyalty and machismo.

The first question I had to ask Sim and Heard was how two white Canadian boys invited kids to brighten the day with their trunks of these "up from the street" kids?

"We came to New York to work with them, to use their music on a documentary we made about Liberia," Sim told GO Brooklyn. At the same time they were looking for a way to use hip-hop to examine gang politics.

"We had to earn their trust, naturally," said Sim. Once that was accomplished, they had to beg favors and borrow to make the film — the usual route of truly independent film-makers.

I sat down with Sim, Heard and DiFiore for bagels and coffee in the



Jesse's girl: Noah Baumbach's autobiographical "The Squid and the Whale," with Jesse Eisenberg and Anna Paquin, won jury awards for directing and writing at Sundance.

New York State lounge on Main Street on Jan. 26. We talked about the pluses of a festival like Sundance.

"Sundance is truly independent," said Heard. Di Fiore concurred.

"A film like mine could get lost in the shuffle of Sundance," Di Fiore said. At Sundance the films stand out from both festivals. "Tragedy" and "The Story of Queensbridge" were the only films that were shown in a 50-seat theater filled to capacity to 50 people lost in a 200-seat hall. In Salt Lake City, however, where films from both festivals were shown, "Tragedy" played to a full house in a huge theater. And what did they discover there?

"There were groups of local hip-

hop fans," said Sim. Who knew?

"On the Outs," by former Cobble Hill resident Lori Silverbush and Fort Greene resident Michael Skolnik, won both the Grand Jury and Audience awards for best feature narrative at Sundance.

Last year, Skolnik was at Sundance as an associate producer of Ivy Meepopol's documentary "Her to an Execution." This year at Sundance, he and Silverbush showed "On the Outs," a drama about the lives of inner-city girls.

In an e-mail, Skolnik told GO Brooklyn about the genesis of the film: "As a documentary filmmaker, I felt very strongly that this film had to be truthful and honest. The only way to make it a reflection of young women incarcerated was to go to the

women themselves. So we spent three months inside a juvenile detention center working with young women who were incarcerated on a variety of charges.

"These young women shared their stories with us, which ultimately became the basis for our film. We are indebted to them because without them we would never have been able to make this film in the way in which it was made."

Skolnik appreciated the reception "On the Outs" received at Sundance.

"We had a blast at Sundance," said Skolnik. "As it was quite a struggle to get people to pay attention to our film, because Sundance is such an attraction, at the end of the day, we were blessed to be part of the festival. The fact that we won the Grand Jury Prize and the Audience Award for Best Narrative Feature was icing on the cake. We never expected to win any awards and the fact that we won two is amazing."

To be sure, there were not only Brooklyn filmmakers in Park City. Short filmmakers and artists with on-line works were also at both festivals. In fact "Bullets in the Hood: A Bed-Stuy Story," a short in which Terrence Fisher and Daniel Howard examined police shootings in their neighborhood, won the top prize in recognition prize. But it's come to this — there are just too many Brooklyn artists to be included in one of our lists, so we'll just mention who couldn't be listed. Good news, though, for filmmakers all over the borough.

Marian Maxone is the associate director of programming for the Film Society of Lincoln Center and chief curator of The New York Video Festival.

**ere** **Compiled by Susan Rosenthal**

**SAT, FEB 5**

**OUTDOORS AND TOURS**

**ICE SKATING:** at the Wellman Park in Prospect Park, \$5 adults, \$3 children and seniors. Skate rentals for \$5. 10 am to 1 pm and 2 pm to 6 pm. Enter Prospect Park at Parkside and Ocean avenues. (718) 287-5252

**PERFORMANCES**

**FIRST WEEKEND:** Brooklyn Arts Exchange hosts its new performance and discussion series featuring several female choreographers premiering new works. \$15, \$10 members, \$8 low-income. 9 pm. 421 Fifth Ave. (718) 632-0018

**GOSPEL PLAY:** "More Love Makes It Right," a play which chronicles a brotherhood relationship. \$30, \$25 for CUNY students, 7 pm. Medgar Evers College, 1450 Bedford Ave. at Crown Street. (718) 926-0091

**BAM:** Brooklyn Academy of Music presents "Amelia," performed by Canada's La La La Human Steps. \$20, \$40, \$40. 730 pm. BAM Howard, 30 Lafayette Ave. (718) 636-4100

**JAZZ:** Also saxophonist Kenny Garrett performs with his quartet. \$25, \$15 students and seniors. 7:30 pm and 9 pm. Brooklyn Conservatory of Music, 38 Seventh Ave. (718) 622-3300

**ST. ANN'S WAREHOUSE:** Preview performance of The Wooster Group's "Fountain Lights," a co-mingling of the opera libretto "Dr. Faustus Lights the Lights" and the 1940s film "The Sign of the Cross." \$27, 8 pm. 38 Water St. (718) 254-8779

**REPORTORY:** The Performing Arts Society of Kingston College presents "Bare Stages II," a play of eight plays by African American writers and faculty. \$15, Oriental Avenue and Manhattan Beach. Call for programs. (718) 368-4770

**CHILDREN**

**AQUARIUM:** Kids 9 to 12 are invited to find out what it's like to be a marine animal keeper at the New York Aquarium. \$25, \$15, 9:30 am to 11 am. West Eighth Street and Surf Avenue. (718) 265-7551

**FILM:** Brooklyn Public Library, Central branch, presents "Lilo and Stitch" (2002). 11 am. Grand Army Plaza. (718) 230-2100

**PUPPETWORKS:** presents classic stories by Hans Christian Andersen: "The Snow Queen" and "The Emperor's New Clothes." \$7 kids, \$8 adults. 12:30 pm and 2:30 pm. 338 Sixth Ave. Reservations necessary. (718) 632-3391

**BROOKLYN MUSEUM:** Art Facts, a story and art tour for kids, presents "Where You Live." \$6, \$3 seniors and students, free for members and children under 12. 11 am and 2 pm. Also, "All That Jazz." 4 pm. 200 Eastern Parkway. (718) 638-5000

**STORYTELLING:** Brooklyn Public Library, Central branch, hosts a celebration of Black History Month with Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity's annual storytelling event. 1 pm. Grand Army Plaza. (718) 230-2100

**KIDS' CARNIVAL:** New Utrecht, 44th Reformed Church hosts a Mardi Gras for kids. Donations accepted. 2 pm to 4 pm. 18th Avenue and 94th Street. (718) 256-0678

**OTHER**

**FIRST SATURDAY:** Brooklyn Museum hosts its monthly event featuring entertainment to celebrate the Mardi Gras and Black History Month. Entertainment includes Latin and Caribbean music, art making, art discussion, and a spoken word event. Movie: "Seven Years Itch" (1955). 9 pm. Dance party begins at 9 pm. 5 pm to 11 pm. 200 Eastern Parkway. (718) 638-5000

**DRIVERS ED:** Assemblyman Cotton obama A.A.A. defensive safety driver course. \$25, 9 am to 4 pm. 211 Kings Highway. (718) 236-1595

**DISCUSSION:** Brooklyn Public Library, Central branch, presents author Barbara Ehrenreich in a discussion about race. 2 pm. Grand Army Plaza. (718) 230-2100

**ARTIST'S TALK:** Bruno Marini Gallery presents artist Janet Nolan in a talk

about her recent works. 2 pm. Atlantic Avenue, between Hoyt and Bond streets. 7:30-24-0808. Free.

**EXHIBIT:** Facing Art Gallery presents art exhibit "Distance Made Good." Event includes readings and live music. 4 pm to 8 pm. 679 Myrtle Ave. (718) 493-3000

**FILM:** Union Temple of Brooklyn presents "Trembling Before God," a documentary about personal and political histories of Orthodox and Hasidic Jews who are gay or lesbian. 6:30 pm. Discussion follows. 17 Eastern Parkway. (718) 638-7400

**RECEPTION:** The Dullahan Art Gallery presents works by Michael J. Sullivan. 8 pm to 10 pm. 37 Broadway. (718) 486-0330. Free.

**SUN, FEB 6**

**PERFORMANCES**

**MAGIC SHOW:** Priest-Illusionist The Conjuring Clergyman performs. \$8, includes one cream after the show. 2 pm. St. Thomas Aquinas Church Hall, Fourth Avenue between 57th and 59th streets. (718) 768-9471

**DANCE:** Young Dancers in Repertoire hosts "A Valentine Concert for Carl." 2 pm. Beach 52, 4812 Ninth Ave. (718) 647-9620

**MUSIC:** Brooklyn Public Library, Central branch, celebrates the Chinese New Year with a program of Chinese music, dancing, singing and acrobatic performances. 2:30 pm. Grand Army Plaza. (718) 230-2100

**CHAMBER MUSIC:** Brooklyn Friends of Chamber Music presents The Jupiter String Quartet. \$15, 3 pm. Lafayette Avenue. (718) 230-2100

**OPEN:** Regine Opera Company presents its annual "Salute to Broadway" concert. \$5 kids, children free. 8 pm. Regine Hall, corner of 65th and 12th Avenues. (718) 252-3555

**OTHER**

**GROUND HOG SERIES:** Brooklyn Arts Exchange presents a performance by students of the Brooklyn School for Collaborative Study. "Spanish As A Living Language." \$5, \$15 kids 12 and under and members. 2 pm. Fifth Ave. (718) 632-0018

**FAMILY FUN SERIES:** Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts at Brooklyn College presents recording artist Justin Roberts. He performs a folk-rock, high-energy sing-along. \$15, 2 pm. Wald Winton Theatre, Brooklyn College, one block from the intersection of Flatbush and Nostrand avenues. (718) 951-4500

**FAMILY WORKSHOPS:** Brooklyn Historical Society invites families to a soap making workshop. Learn all about soaps and their uses. Free admission and materials. 2 pm. 128

Pierpont St. (718) 222-4111

**MEETING:** AARP Narrows Chapter meets. 2 pm. Our Lady of Angels, 337 7th Ave. (718) 200-2028

**INTERCITY TALK:** Park Slope Geriatric Day Center offers a series of talks about caring for older persons. 6 pm to 7 pm. 1 Prospect Park West. (718) 697-7071

**MEETING:** of Community Board 7, 6:30 pm. 420 Fourth Ave. (718) 654-0003

**MEETING:** Long Island College University presents Randall Kenan. He reads from his new book "Let the Dead Bury Their Dead." 6:30 pm. Flatbush Avenue. (718) 488-1089. Free.

**THURS, FEB 10**

**WORKING WORKSHOP:** Families First offers a series of workshops for parents. Learn how to write for self-expression, creating keepers or pur-

using publication. 9:30 am to 11:30 am. Call for registration information. 250 B'way St. (718) 624-5053.

**LITERARY SERIES:** National Book Foundation and the Brooklyn Academy of Music presents "Eat, Drink and Be Merry: Diner and a Reading at BAM Cafe." Tonight author Paul Auster and moderator Waverstein. \$38 includes dinner and wine. 7:30 pm. 30 Lafayette Ave. (718) 636-4100

**PUBLIC MEETING:** Brooklyn Bridge Park Development Corporation reveals its new park design in a town hall style public meeting. 7:30 pm. 123 Remsen St. and Joralemon streets. Free.

**CONSERVATIVE TALK:** Park Slope Jewish Center and the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism presents a talk "Lubavitch: Shrimp and Frog's Legs: The Founders of the Chabad Movement." 7:30 pm. Temple Shalom, 2075 E. 68th St. (718) 768-1453. Free.

**OTHER**

**Flea Market:** at RC Church of St. Finbar 9 am to 3 pm. Both Avenue Bay 20th Street. (718) 236-3312

**YEAR OF THE ROOSTER:** Brooklyn Public Library, Central branch, hosts "Music, Magic and More," an event which features Chinese dance, acrobatics and magic. 2:30 pm to 4 pm. Grand Army Plaza. (718) 230-2100

**MON, FEB 7**

**LAW COURSE:** Brooklyn Bar Association offers a course "Searching in Lexis." \$35, 1 pm to 2 pm. 123 Remsen St. (718) 624-0075

**PARENTING WORKSHOP:** Families First offers a talk "If You Think Your Two Kids are Tough, Wait 'Til Three." \$15, 6 pm to 8 pm. 37 Broadway. (718) 486-0330

**COMMUNITY MEETING:** Community Board 14, Transportation Committee, presents a new look at live-beats Harbor Freight Movement Project. 7 pm. Edward R. Murrow High School, Avenue L and East 17th Street. (718) 859-6357

**TEEN ARTS:** Brooklyn Arts Exchange hosts a conference featuring dance, theater and performance by teens. Today "Arts and Social Change" for teaching artists and classroom teachers. 6 pm to 9 pm. 421 Fifth Ave. Pre-registration necessary. (718) 632-0018

**FISH TALK:** Brooklyn Aquarium Society presents a new look at live-beats with Ted Colletti, columnist, lecturer and author. \$5, free for members. 7:30 pm. NY Aquarium, West Eighth Street and Surf Avenue. (718) 857-4455

**VALENTINE'S CONCERT:** Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts at Brooklyn College presents The Cell Court Jugglers Debra Silver and former A.D.A. Arnold Kins are guest speakers. 7:30 pm. Bay Ridge Post. 157, 345 79th St. (718) 745-2539

**VALENTINE'S MUSIC:** One World Symphony performs works by Williams and Monty Python. 8 pm. 515 seniors, 10 students. 8 pm. At the World Trinity center. (718) 462-7270

**65+ ARTS:** presents the Evidence Dance Company in a performance. Music by the Kinsler Quartet. \$40, \$30, \$20, \$10. 7:30 pm. 65+ seniors, 10 students. 8 pm. BAM Howard, 30 Lafayette Ave. (718) 636-4100

**FILMMAKERS PROGRAM:** Training program for young filmmakers. Behind the scenes with Brooklyn Historical Society. 7:30 pm. 440 46th St. (718) 439-8976

**MUSIC:** St. Jacob's hosts a concert series and presents opera by the NY Academy of Music. 8 pm. 440 46th St. (718) 439-8976

**CHILDREN**

**NY AQUARIUM:** offers a class "Jelly Jam!" Kids, ages 5 to 8, are invited to learn about sea jellies and their kin. Program includes song, art and story telling. \$26, \$21 members (per adult child). 10:30 am to noon. West Eighth Avenue and Surf Avenue. (718) 265-7551

**GROUNDHOG SERIES:** Brooklyn Arts Exchange presents a winter puppetry performance. \$10, \$8 kids under 12. 421 Fifth Ave. (718) 632-0018

**PUPPETS:** Brooklyn Arts Exchange presents its winter puppetry program. \$15, \$10 members, \$8 low-income. 12:30 pm and 2:30 pm. 338 Sixth Ave. Reservations necessary. (718) 632-3391

**SAT, FEB 12**

**OUTDOORS AND TOURS**

**ICE SKATING:** The Wellman Park in Prospect Park, \$5 adults, \$3 children and seniors. Skate rentals for \$5. 10 am to 1 pm and 2 pm to 6 pm. Enter Prospect Park at Parkside and Ocean avenues. (718) 287-5252

**PERFORMANCE**

**BBCC:** Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts at Brooklyn College presents "Where You Live." \$6, \$3 seniors and students, free for members and children under 12. 11 am and 2 pm. Also, "Stories and Art" presents "All That Jazz." 4 pm. 200 Eastern Parkway. (718) 638-5000

**FILM:** Brooklyn Public Library, Central branch, presents "Lilo and Stitch" (2002). 11 am. Grand Army Plaza. (718) 230-2100

**TEEN ARTS:** Brooklyn Arts Exchange hosts a series of workshops for teens in dance, acting, playwriting, auditioning, yoga and more. 10 am to noon. Also, higher education opportunities in dance and theater for students and parents. Noon to 1 pm. Workshops continue from 2:15 pm to 4 pm. Finally, live performance at 8 pm. \$5 donation. \$44

**SEVENTH AVE:** (718) 632-0018. Free.

**PUPPETWORKS:** presents classic stories by Hans Christian Andersen: "The Snow Queen" and "The Emperor's New Clothes." \$7 kids, \$8 adults and seniors. 12:30 pm and 2:30 pm. 338 Sixth

Ave. Reservations necessary. (718) 965-3391

**OTHER**

**BAM CINEMATHEQUE:** presents The Best of the African Diaspora Film Festival. Today: "Kikuyu and the Sorcerer" (1998). 2 pm. "Au Pair Chocolat" (2004). 4:30 pm. "Rise Your Voice" (2004). 6:50 pm. "How to Conquer America in One Night" (2004). 9:30 pm. 30 Lafayette Ave. (718) 636-4100

**MOVIES AT THE MUSEUM:** Brooklyn Museum screens "You See Me Laughing" (2000), a parable about the lives and music of the last of the Mississippi folk country blues. \$8, \$4 students and members. 1 pm and 3 pm. 200 Eastern Parkway. (718) 638-5000

**MEETING:** AARP Ovington chapter, meets. 1 pm. 450 Ovington Ave. (718) 748-0650. Free.

**BROOKLYN ARTISTS:** Brooklyn Historical Society presents "Love and Hip Hop in Brooklyn," with Brooklyn resident and writer Nelson George. Includes in admission fee of \$6, \$4 seniors and students under 12. Pierpont St. (718) 222-4111

**ARTIST RECEPTION:** Williamsburg Art and Historic Center presents "Unfamiliar Destinations: Landscapes as Search of Black Female Reality" (2004). 9:15 pm. 135 Broadway. (718) 486-7372

**READING:** Spiral Thought hosts a spoken word series. 6 pm to 8 pm. Shakespearean Society, 270 Court St. (718) 832-2310

**SEX IN THE SEA:** Single's social mixer at the NY Aquarium. Live show animals "fall in love." Adults \$21, \$34, \$29 members includes wine and cheese. 7 pm to 9:30 pm. West Eighth Street and Surf Avenue. (718) 857-4455

**DINNER DANCE:** Valentine event hosted by the Italian Association of St. Mary Mother of Jesus Church. \$45, 7:30 pm. Call for location. (718) 372-5200

**TALMUD FOR CONSERVATIVES:** Park Slope Jewish Center hosts a three-part "Talmudic Passages Every Conservative Jew Should Know." \$45, \$35 members. After Saturday morning services. 512 16th St. #2. (718) 768-1453

**SUN, FEB 13**

**PERFORMANCE**

**BBCC:** Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts celebrates Black History Month with Opera House Brooklyn's "Alas." \$40, 2 pm. Walt Whitman Theatre, on the campus of Brooklyn College. (718) 632-0018

**MUSIC:** St. Jacob's hosts a concert series and presents opera by the NY Academy of Music. 8 pm. 440 46th St. (718) 439-8976

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**NY AQUARIUM:** offers a class "Jelly Jam!" Kids, ages 5 to 8, are invited to learn about sea jellies and their kin. Program includes song, art and story telling. \$26, \$21 members (per adult child). 10:30 am to noon. West Eighth Avenue and Surf Avenue. (718) 265-7551

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# Heart & Soul

**The Coasters' Dave Revels to unleash 'Love Potion No. 9' and more at Brooklyn Center**

By **Paulanne Simmons**  
for The Brooklyn Papers

Whether you're carrying a torch or lighting a fire, Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts will be the place for lovers this Feb. 11, at a pre-Valentine's Day concert featuring Cornell Gunter's Coasters, Elsbey Hobb's Drifters and the Platters. The show is a stop on the "Stand Up America" national tour the three groups are making together.

Although the original performers are by now either deceased or retired, their music is perpetuated by vocalists who carry on their name, their spirit and their music.

Vocalist Dave Revels, a member of the Coasters, explains what makes these groups so special.

"Their songs had fantastic melodies with subject matter about everyday life. Some people's memories are tied to those songs," he told *GO Brooklyn*. But Revels also said that their audiences include "age groups across the board." Of course those who were listening to and buying vinyl in 1950s and 1960s are well represented, but there are also teenagers and young adults whose "par-

ents shared their music with them."

Each of the three groups has its own distinctive style.

"The Platters are legendary for their 'wonderful romantic songs,' said Revels, songs like "Smoke Gets in Your Eyes," "Only You," "With This Ring" and "The Great Pretender." Inducted into The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1990, The Platters have played in venues from Madison Square Garden to the Bottom Line.

"Fun in the sun, beach music" is what characterizes the Drifters, said Revels. Their hits include "Under the Boardwalk," "Up on the Roof" and "Save the Last Dance for Me."

"The Drifters have also made more than 100 television appearances and have worked with songwriters Burt Bacharach, Carole King, Don Pomus and Leitch & Stoltz."

As for his own group, the Coasters, Revels said humor was a major part of its success.

"Comedy is an important element in human life. No matter how depressed we are, we need to lighten our lives," he explained.

The Coasters' hits include "Yakety Yak," "Love Potion No. 9" and "Charlie Brown." The first vocal group to be



In perfect harmony: Cornell Gunter's Coasters, featuring (left to right) Ron Beau, Earnest Harrison, Michael Raynor and Dave Revels, will perform with Elsbey Hobb's Drifters and The Platters at Brooklyn Center on Feb. 11.

inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, the Coasters have appeared with Chuck Berry, Little Richard, Bill Haley and the Comets, The Shirelles and Rich Little.

"People who loved and experienced our music still want to hear it," Revels said. "There's lots of audience participation in our show. People sing with us and dance with us. It's a very friendly, fun environment."

Revels believes "music has always been a unifying force." And he doesn't think the nature of music has changed that much over time.

"There's good and bad music in every generation," he said.

But he does believe that audiences have changed because of the new technology that is now available.

"With the ability to download music and burn CDs, fans are less loyal," he said. "Nowadays, you don't make us music. You have to leave what you do."

After Sept. 11, 2001, Revels wrote a

song, "Stand Up America," which has become the centerpiece of the group's national tour. Revels said that the song was inspired by what he saw while touring the country after that tragic event.

"We got to experience how the country was dealing with the tragedy of that date," he said. "I wrote the song about how America was dealing with the traumatic experience of losing so many people. I know people personally who perished there."

The groups' national tour has taken them to many military bases where they entertain not only men and women in the armed forces, but also their families.

"As entertainers, we know what it's like to be away from home for a few weeks," Revels said. "But we know that can't compare with military families whose loved ones are away from home for months. What really moves me [after 9-11] is how people forget their difficult moments and wanted to get their know-how others felt."

And that's a kind of love too. Isn't it?

## ASSISTED...

Continued from page 7

"My deep desire when I started this project was to not merely mix documentary with fiction but to make someone out of the distinction. Because film is this art form where you take pictures of real things and then you put them together in a row. It's not like 'that shot's real, and that shot's fake.' It's not fictional or documentary. It has to be in a context."

"If you film James Bond saying, 'I think that's a handsome fork,' and then there's a close up of a hand picking up the fork, no one's like, 'They did such a great job mixing documentary and fiction in the new James Bond movie.' And now this is suddenly a fictional fork, a fake fork in a fake hand in a fictional context. There are actual scenes [in 'Assisted Living'] which are part of a fictional narrative but they don't have any acting in it."

While Todd's antics provide much of the comic relief of the story, the director takes us with Todd into places where the viewer must confront their own mortality and the grim aging process. In one such scene, Todd goes to the infirmary where waiting patients are suffering from dementia and other ills.

"Todd has to have an aversion to age," said Greenbaum, "and the audience is so relieved because they have an aversion to age. And then they get screwed because they have to go where people are old and sick."

But Greenbaum says the film, stemmed less from an interest in raising awareness about elder-care issues, than an interest in telling a mother-son story.

"It's about a mother who wants her son to rescue her and about a janitor's decision to be that son, or not. And that was the story. Now what made me interested in mother-son issues? I have a mom, and I'm her son," said Greenbaum, deliberately ending further discussion with an intriguing Cheshire cat grin.



Odd couple: Maggie Riley (as Mrs. Pearlman) and Michael Borzage (as Todd) in Elliot Greenbaum's film, "Assisted Living."

Greenbaum said his next film will be set in another atmospheric location, but "it will be Terrence Malick-y, with a strong script, but with less visceral impact. It will be more formal and less experimental."

"My next film is going to be at a small airport — a fixed base operation... There are stages that have a lot of poetry for me. And I like airplanes for some reason... and somehow you get in these sort of middle rides with yourself trying to structure things so that they're poetic so the characters hit their marks and the emotional choreography will be right and you come out with this sculpture of some kind that hopefully feels like a thing. 'Assisted Living' feels like a little sculpture, like a Joseph Cornell [shadow] box."

The filmmaker has a rigorous strategy to get himself through the opening week of "Assisted Living," which he hopes will trigger a wider release across the country in the coming weeks and months and hopefully signal an end to this roller coaster ride.

Said Greenbaum, "I keep myself exhausted to keep away the fears."

## BROOKLYN Nightlife

**The Backroom**  
(Inside Freddy's Bar) 485 Dean St. at Sixth Avenue in Prospect Heights. (718) 622-7035. www.freddysbackroom.com

Feb. 5: Spunkadelic, 9:30 p.m. FREE; Feb. 6: Pat O'Shaughnessy, "Comedy Night," 9 p.m. FREE; Feb. 7: Will Vinton, Time TBD, 10 p.m. FREE; Feb. 8: J. P. Kelly, 10 p.m. FREE; Feb. 9: J. P. Kelly, 10 p.m. FREE; Feb. 10: J. P. Kelly, 10 p.m. FREE; Feb. 11: J. P. Kelly, 10 p.m. FREE; Feb. 12: J. P. Kelly, 10 p.m. FREE; Feb. 13: J. P. Kelly, 10 p.m. FREE; Feb. 14: J. P. Kelly, 10 p.m. FREE; Feb. 15: J. P. Kelly, 10 p.m. FREE; Feb. 16: J. P. Kelly, 10 p.m. FREE; Feb. 17: J. P. Kelly, 10 p.m. FREE; Feb. 18: J. P. Kelly, 10 p.m. FREE; Feb. 19: J. P. Kelly, 10 p.m. FREE; Feb. 20: J. P. Kelly, 10 p.m. FREE; Feb. 21: J. P. Kelly, 10 p.m. FREE; Feb. 22: J. P. Kelly, 10 p.m. FREE; Feb. 23: J. P. Kelly, 10 p.m. FREE; Feb. 24: J. P. Kelly, 10 p.m. FREE; Feb. 25: J. P. Kelly, 10 p.m. FREE; Feb. 26: J. P. Kelly, 10 p.m. FREE; Feb. 27: J. P. Kelly, 10 p.m. FREE; Feb. 28: J. P. Kelly, 10 p.m. FREE; Feb. 29: J. P. Kelly, 10 p.m. FREE; Feb. 30: J. P. Kelly, 10 p.m. FREE; Feb. 31: J. P. 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## Help finding the right preschool

### Parent-to-Parent

By Betsy Flieger

Q: It's time to register for preschool. I'm worried that I won't get my first choice for my son, who will be 3 years old in early fall. —A mother

A: Preschool pressure ranks up there with getting kids into the right college. But there's no need to panic.

When thinking about back-up options, be open-minded about other preschools in your area and consider less-popular two-day-a-week programs. Or even delay the start of your child's education.

Are you hoping your child will get into an academically oriented class? Think again. Early childhood specialists are finding that what kids learn through play is pleasurable. Even if you snag your top choice, it may not be the best fit for your child: One mother moved her 3-year-old son out of a popular preschool, partly because transitions were handled in a rigid way. The class was run on a timer: 15 minutes of block towers and it was time to move on.

One "Parent to Parent" reader found that her 4-year-old son lashed out at his teachers during daily workbook and journal times, and had outbursts when it was time to move to a different task. The academic setting, highly touted by her friends, was not the place for her son.

"With the pressure to learn all the time, we've forgotten how to help our children," says Kathy Hirsch-Pasek, PhD, co-author of "Einstein Never Used Flash Cards" (Routledge, 2003). "Play is to early childhood as gas is to a car."

Preschoolers belong at messy art tables, on the floor building block towers and climbing jungle gyms.

When you observe a classroom, you should see several learning centers: a special table full of water, rice or beads kids can measure, sift and pour; an art station with minimal teacher direction; an area for modeling Play-Doh into cookies; a table for matching games, puzzles and stringing beads; a block zone; a housekeeping center; and a quiet reading corner.

school, some elements are tangible: Teacher training, the ratio of teachers and students, the turnover rate of teachers, the size of the groups, and the health and safety of the program are all important to weigh.

Other concerns are more difficult to measure: Does the class feel warm and inviting? How do the teachers strengthen social and emotional skills within the class? Questions to explore:

- **Sharing:** Are there enough materials and duplicates of popular toys?
- **Discipline:** Do the teachers approach discipline as teaching or as punishment?
- **Expressing feelings:** Do the teachers help their students use their words to make their needs known?
- **Building friendship skills:** Do teachers plan activities that encourage children to help each other?
- **Focusing:** To help a child stick to a task, are the teachers able to adjust to individual learning styles?

Some advantages of preschool: A child learns how to enter a group of peers, how to take turns with toys and talking in circle, and how to hold his emotions together until the end of the play day.

Preschool also gives Mom a break and can help children build up their resistance to germs.

With so many kids in preschool or day care, it can be tough for a stay-at-home child to learn how to play with other children and function in a large group.

Parents find that if they decide not to send their child to preschool or they wind up on a waiting list, it helps to organize play dates and child-care swaps: enroll their kids in classes such as gymnastics; and take them on regular trips to the library and museums.

Read, read, read together, and have plenty of art supplies, blocks and puzzles on hand. For help in finding a quality preschool, or if you're interested in activities you can do at home to encourage your child's development, go to the Web site of the National Association of Education of Young Children at www.naeyc.org.

### Can you help?

Q: "When my 3-year-old son is around other children, his energy level exceeds, he starts to bounce, his listening stops and his aggressive behavior comes out. When he's really mad at something, mainly if he doesn't get his way, he pushes his sister, friends and me sometimes, even with a closed fist."

Since his second surgery for his ears in December, his behavior has been a little better, but I still feel he can't play well with other children.

For example, he recently had a playdate with his best friend, and they were playing nicely until she decided she wanted to go upstairs. My son didn't want to, so as she was walking up the stairs he grabbed her feet and pulled her down. What should I do? —a mother

Parents concerned about their children's social intake can obtain a copy of the new Parent to Parent newsletter "Getting Over Overeating" by sending a long, self-addressed, stamped envelope and \$2 to Newsletter, P.O. Box 167, Wickliffe, OH 44092.

If you have tips or a question, call our toll-free hotline any time at (800) 827-1092 or e-mail us at p2ptips@att.net.

## Plumber gets jail for MTA rob

Associated Press

The owner of a Gowanus plumbing business and his son were sentenced Jan. 28 to prison terms and his wife to probation on guilty pleas related to stealing millions of dollars from the Metropolitan Transportation Authority.

Alex Figliolia Sr., 61, his wife, Janet Figliolia, 54, both of Holmdel, N.J., and his son Alex Figliolia Jr., 31, of Staten Island, also paid restitution of \$6 million to the agency and forfeited \$750,000 worth of jewelry.

The Figliolia men pleaded guilty last September to enterprise corruption, and Janet Figliolia pleaded guilty to bribery. Figliolia Sr. was sentenced to between 21 months and more than 5 years and Figliolia Jr. got 33 months to more than 8 years in prison. They would have faced up to 25 years if convicted at trial. Janet Figliolia, 54, was sentenced to five years probation.

The judge sentenced their company, Alex Figliolia Contracting Corp., to a conditional discharge.

A 116-count indictment returned in December 2003 alleged the Figliolias, with MTA employees' help, stole public agency's money by inflating invoices, overcharging for labor and materials and forging business records.

The schemes caused the MTA to pay Figliolia Contracting—which has offices at 420 Carroll St. between Broad and Nassau streets, and at 473 President St. between Nevins and Third Avenue—more than \$18 million since 1994 for plumbing and renovation work at numerous MTA buildings. Manhattan District attorney Robert Morgenthau said when he announced the defendants' arrests.

Morgenthau said the MTA defendants were Howard Weissman, 54, of East Meadow, N.Y., a former director of facility operations who earned \$124,000 a year; Ronald Allan, 54, of Beacon, N.Y., a former \$77,000-a-year facilities manager; and Gary Weissbard, 54, of Manhattan, a \$71,000-a-year building manager.

Weissman pleaded guilty to enterprise corruption. Allan pleaded guilty to second-degree bribe receiving and Weissbard pleaded guilty to receiving a reward for official misconduct. Morgenthau's office said. None of them has been sentenced.

## STATE BORO...

Continued from page 1

ed jobs" the sisters shouted in unison, "Lies." The shouting drew two community affairs police officers, who on two occasions threatened to throw out the critics.

Possibly predicting protests, Markowitz also acknowledged criticism of the plan in his address.

"I want to say right now that I fully understand—and share the concerns—of local area residents who have spoken out in opposition to this development," said Markowitz. "People of goodwill can differ."

"And constructive opposition is something I value and cherish because I honestly believe that—in the end—it makes for a better plan."

"The Nets arena—and the Atlantic Yards project—will go forward, but it must work for both Brooklyn and for the community surrounding the arena," he said. "Because people do not move out of Brooklyn today seeking a better life. They move out because they can't afford the good life we have here."

The two-hour session differed little from last year's address, save for a break in tradition that found Markowitz inviting several guest speakers to the podium.

Besides Danza, Mayor Michael Bloomberg, Public Advocate Betsy Gohbaum and Council Speaker Gifford Miller were also given brief turns at the mike. All four used their time to praise Markowitz.

"I love being here with Marty," said Miller, a likely mayoral candidate, who did not mention Bloomberg or any of his projects, in his speech. "What other elected official could stand on stage with Tony Danza and go toe to toe with him other than Marty Markowitz? None of us would even bother to try. Marty, I'm sure, has been serial calling him for 10 years. And nobody says 'no' to Marty Markowitz."

He added: "Brooklyn without Marty is like Jesus' without cheesecake. You can do it, but it wouldn't be as sweet."

## EXPLORER...

Continued from page 1

States—an architect of space ships, adventurer and a storm chaser—hail from Texas, Missouri and Colorado, respectively.

"I'm the first one they've had to do exploration of the future," said Zolli, who said he will use \$100,000 in grant money from National Geographic to do field work abroad. "Where many of the other folks are exploring either engineering or the natural world, I'm exploring time."

Though the term futurist conjures a distant age of flying cars and domesticated robots, practitioners aren't necessarily dreaming up science fiction, said Zolli. Rather, the profession is one in which current demographics and other forces interact with each other to shape the future.

By looking at today's census statistics, for example, it's possible to anticipate 10 years from now what demographics can an hourglass society, where seniors and young people will represent most of the population, he said. With more elderly, expect more conservative voters and a demand for more senior housing, said Zolli. If that housing isn't developed, he said, expect to see grandparents, parents and children all living under one roof.

"There's a famous truism, and that is that 'demographics is destiny,'" said Zolli. "The people who live in a society, the kind of people who live in a society, very much determine the kind of political, cultural, economic and technological forces that get discussed, that are worked on."

A Boston native and graduate of Vassar College, Zolli has served as a "Futurist-in-Residence" at Popular Science and American Demographics magazines and Public Radio's "Marketplace" program. "I absolutely love and am passionate about Brooklyn, which I think is the true inner borough. That is where the bridge-and-tunnel crowd lives, over there," said Zolli, pointing toward Manhattan from his tiny, ultra-modern ninth-floor office. "We are the authentic core of the city."

Terry Garcia, executive vice president of Mission Programs at National Geographic, said that Zolli was brought to his attention after several people, including several at the society, heard him speak on emerging trends. While the program does not respond to applications, Garcia said that those sent in anticipation of grant money typically number in the thousands.

Created last year as something of a youthful antidote to its well-known Explorers-in-Residence program—a group boasting historical Stephen Ambrose and ethnologist Jane Goodall among its honorees—members of the group are typically called from a list of hundreds, said Garcia.

"It's a departure for us to select a futurist and I think it's a very positive development for the National Geographic, which hopes to expand and extend the boundaries of exploration and science," said Garcia. "And Andrew certainly does that."

So, what does Zolli see in the cards for Brooklyn, what with big development sprouting from Red Hook to Downtown Brooklyn and all across the waterfront?

"Largely the question depends on some actions that we take right now. I mean, what's happening right now that's really exciting? The arena comes to mind," Zolli said, referring to developer Bruce Ratner's plan to build a basketball arena, office skyscrapers and apartment buildings in Prospect Heights.

"The thing is, take that project in context," he said. "I know it's a controversial subject, but look around and what you'll see is a new terminal for cruise ships, this incredible waterfront park and more. Each one of these things needs to be done in a way that's minimally destructive and maximally beneficial to the community at large."

"But if even half of those projects come through, they have a transformational impact," he said.

"When you look at the terminal, and the redevelopment of Red Hook, what you start to see is Brooklyn spreading beyond the enclave of brownstone neighborhoods that had defined the borough's elite," said Zolli.

"And that's very, very effective."

Asked about his own future, Zolli laughed.

"I'll be expanding the office soon," he said.

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